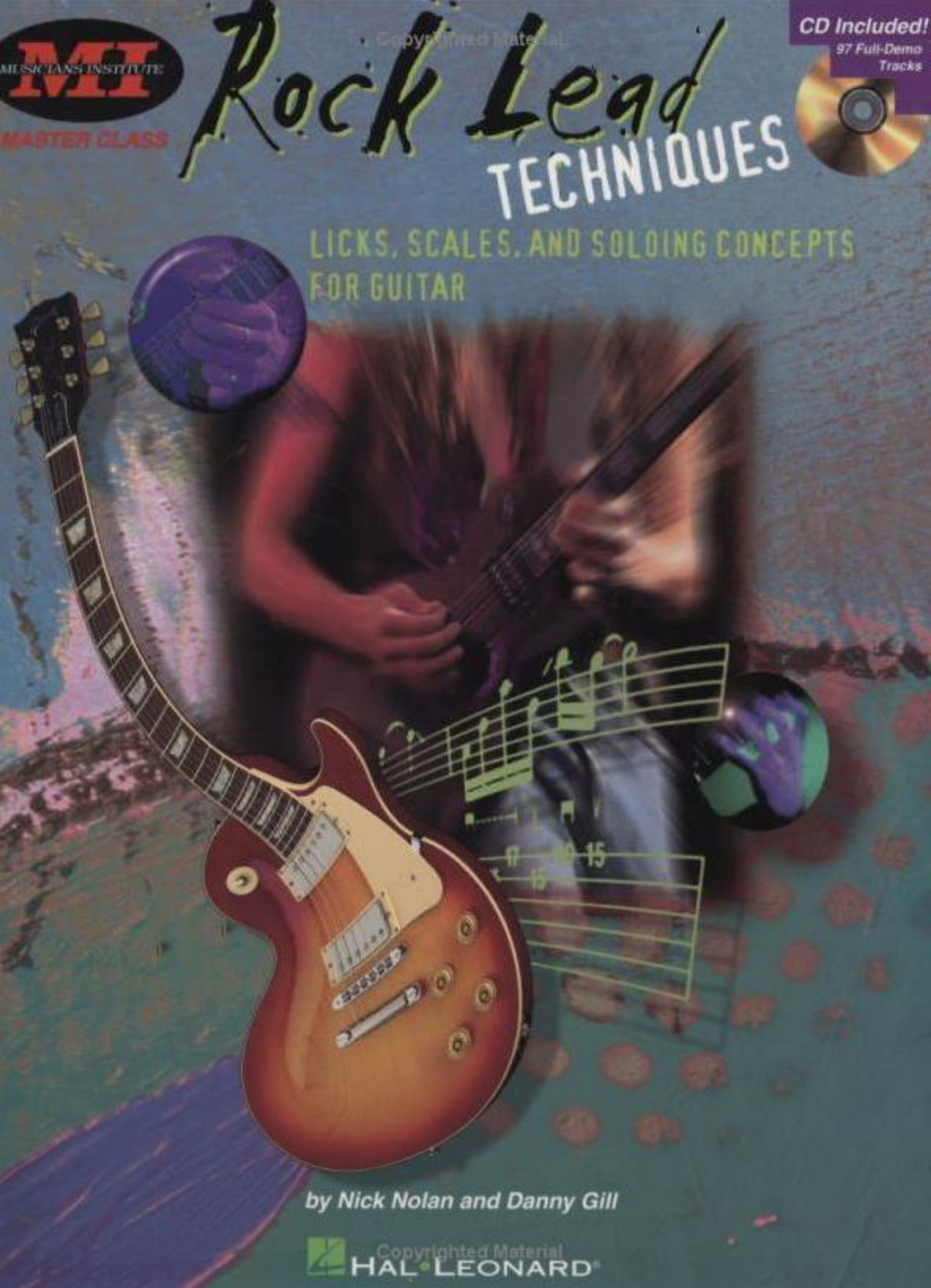

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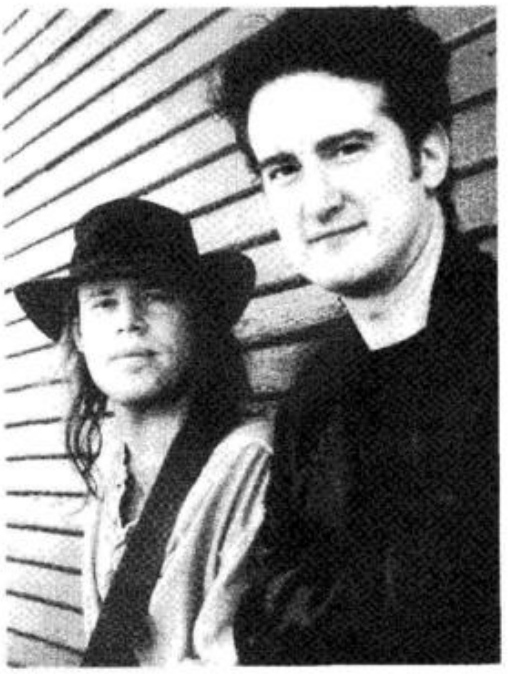
ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Nolan

He then went to G.I.T. on the Eddie Van Halen Scholarship

instructor at G.I.T., teaching and writing curriculum for such sub-

Rhythm Section Workshop, as well as teaching Music Reading, Harmony and Theory, Ear Training, and Modern Rock Performance.

"Melrose

"Where's

"Exosquad" (Universal), "What a Mess" (DIC), "Don Coyote" (Hanna-Magoo" Hanna-Barbera."

Back Again on Standing 8 Records (P.O. Box 5280, North Hollywood, CA 91616)

a name at press time) in 1998 on MCA records. His songs have appeared on numerous network TV.

Rock Rhythm Guitar, Rock Lead Guitar, and Single String Technique.

CREDITS

Nick Nolan: guitar
Danny Gill: guitar
Ian Mayo: bass
Tim Pedersen: drums

Recorded at M.I. Studios by Howard Karp

Nick thanks:

Danny thanks:

(◆1)

of context. However, only the main lick itself appears transcribed in each case.

CHAPTER 1

PICKING TECHNIQUE

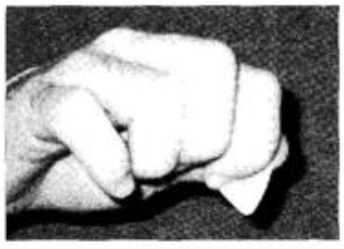
A G.I.T. pick—but are some bad ways (in terms of speed and clarity). You'll know if you've got some bad habits if you've faster—or, always sloppy.

After years of practicing and teaching, we've come up with a method that will help get your picking fast and clean and works in any style. This method is naturally arrived at by many guitarists. In fact, we've had the opportunity to talk to some of the best technical players around when developing this picking style.

ty. Others may want to become real shredders.

Hand placement

cient your picking technique is. The key to speed and accuracy is *relaxation.* Try this: Hold your pick between your thumb and first finger (see Picture 1).



Picture 1

Picture 2

Attacking a note

down—others

your forearm is relaxed. The only motion is from your wrist. It is similar to turning a key inside a lock—a twisting motion.

Ready to attack a note on the fourth string, the pick is *positioned above* the fourth string.

The pick makes contact with the third string at about a 45° angle.

The pick has attacked the third string and is resting on the second string.

The pick comes back through the third string at the same angle.

somewhere *above* the fourth string.

As you become familiar with the pick attack motion, take notice of the wrist movement. It is possible

ly. Trying to go fast now will be a *big* waste of time.

The exercises

Fig. 1

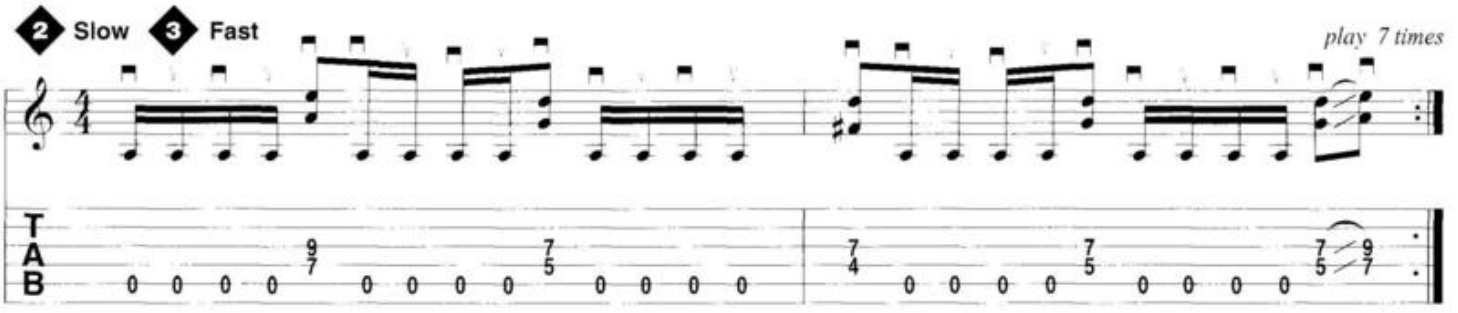


Fig. 2

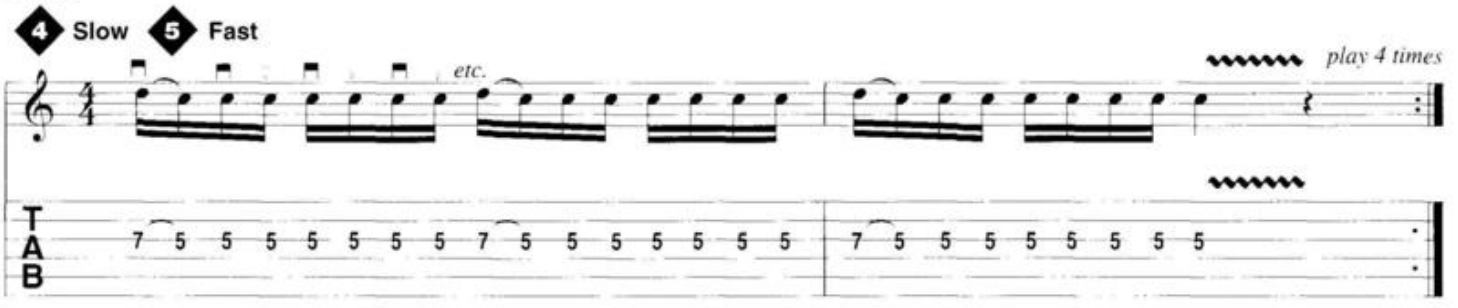
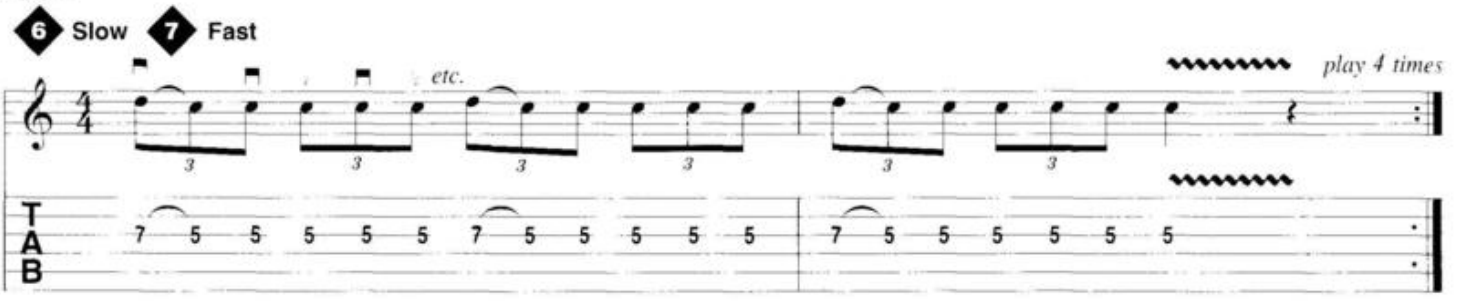
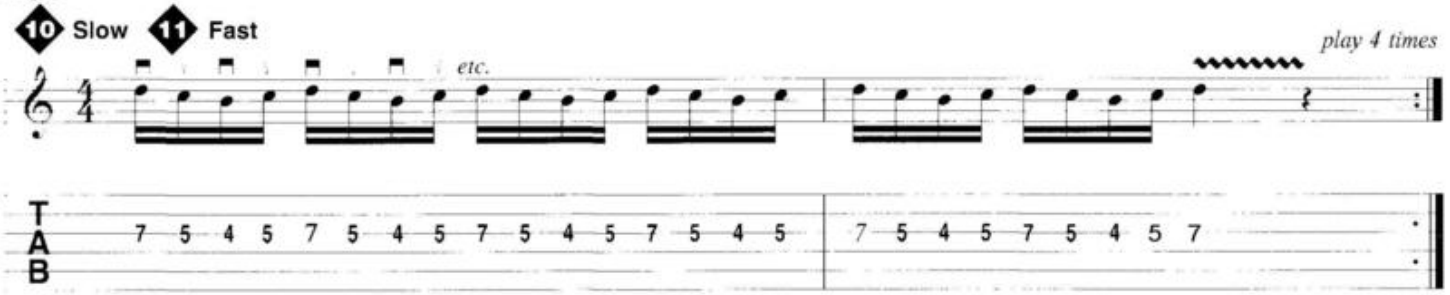



Fig. 3

except chords. When you don't want muted notes move your hand back until it doesn't touch the strings.

A *word about picks:* Heavier gauge picks will give you a more confident attack. However, use whatever

The following exercises deal with one string at a time. This is so you don't waste any concentration on changing from one string to another. For now, concentrate on playing each note clearly. Move these exercises around—play them at different points on the fingerboard. Try them on all six strings. As always, use a

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

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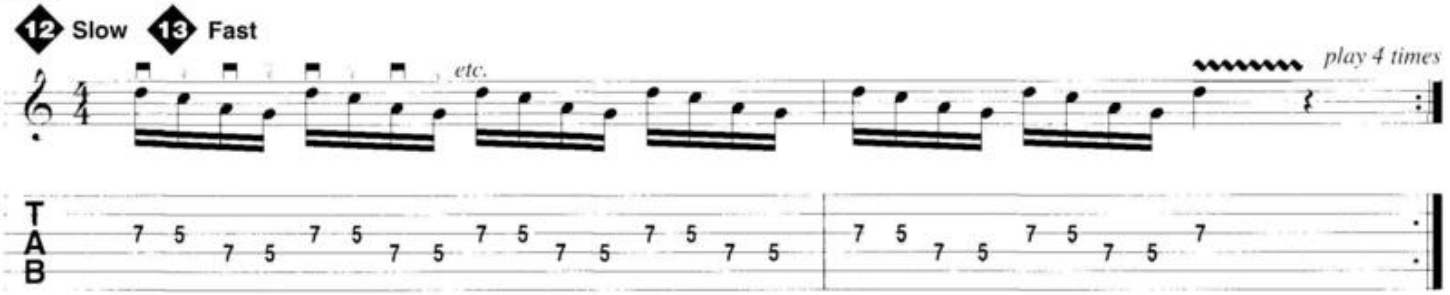
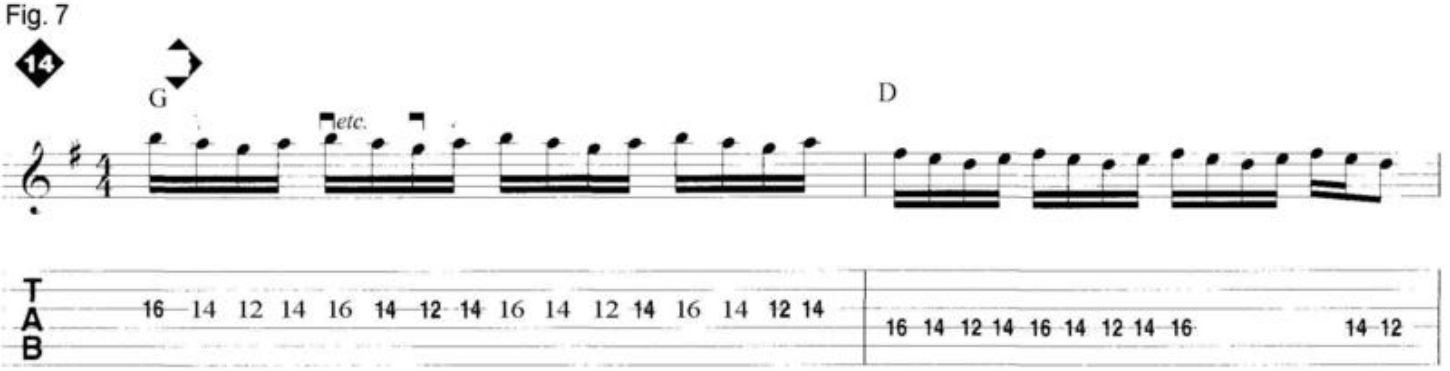
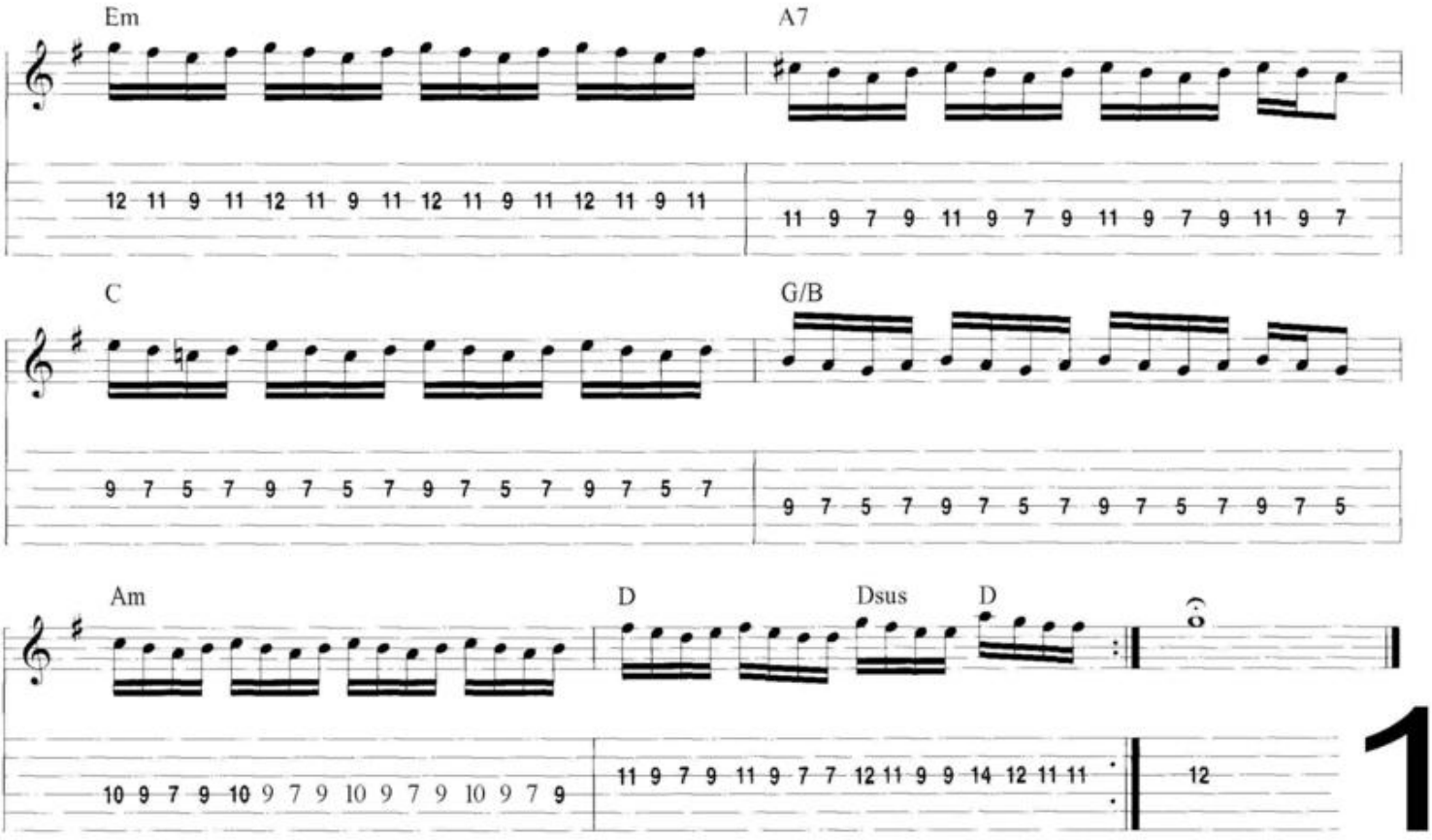


Fig. 7





Now that you've mastered your wrist and synchronization, the next step is changing strings. Build on what you've learned. Your hand should look and feel the same on these next exercises as it did on Fig. 1.

Fig. 8

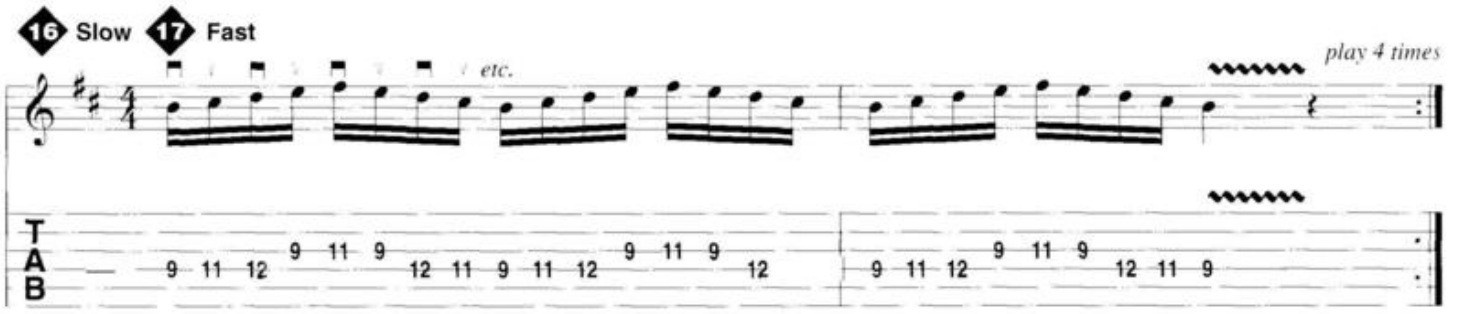



Fig. 9

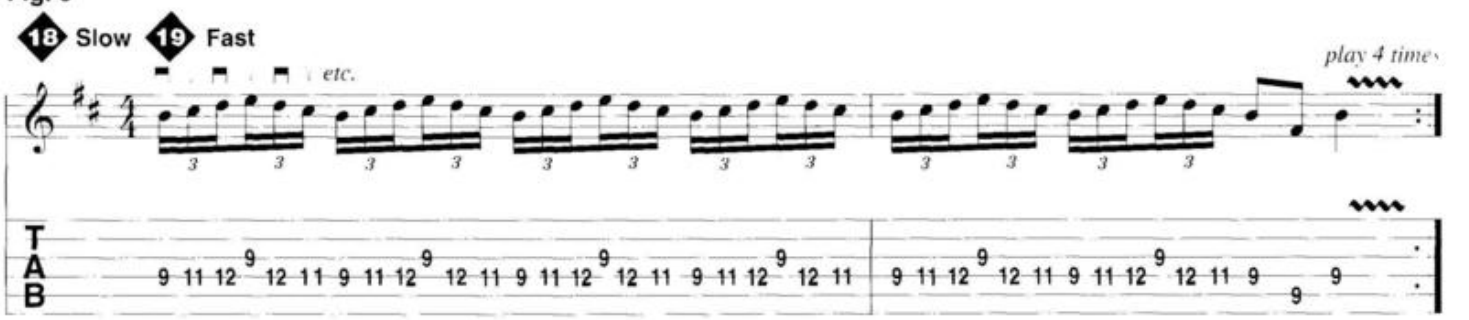



Fig. 10

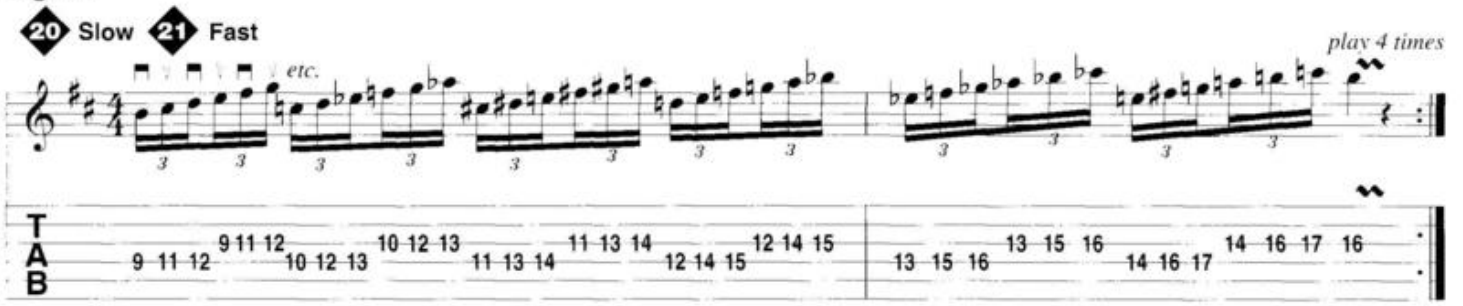



Fig. 11

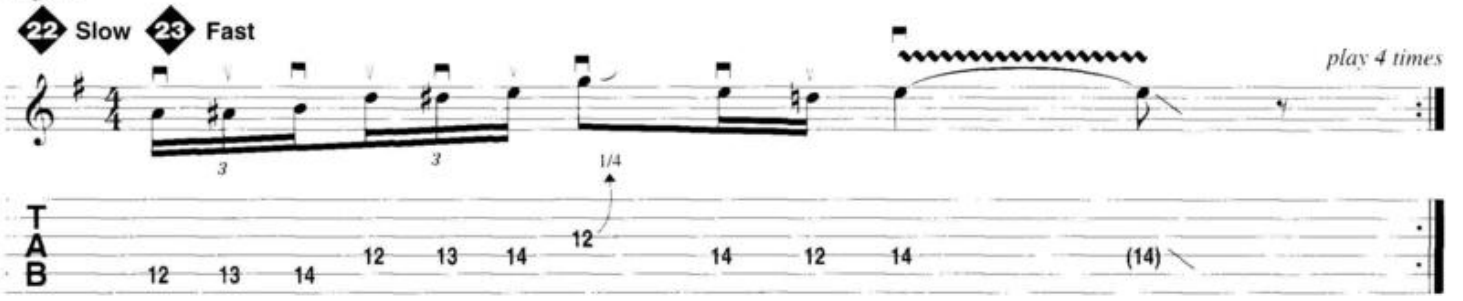
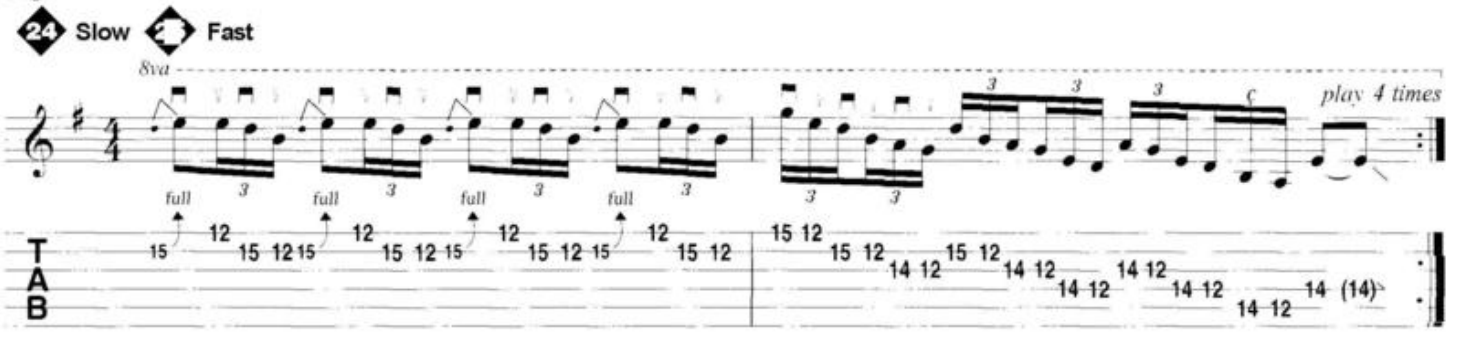


Fig.



Application

bit more advanced *or* you skimmed over the other sections too quickly. If you fall into the second category, make sure you've nailed every section.

to get the new picking technique into your everyday playing. Pay attention to the key and remember what you've learned in the previous sections.

Fig. 13

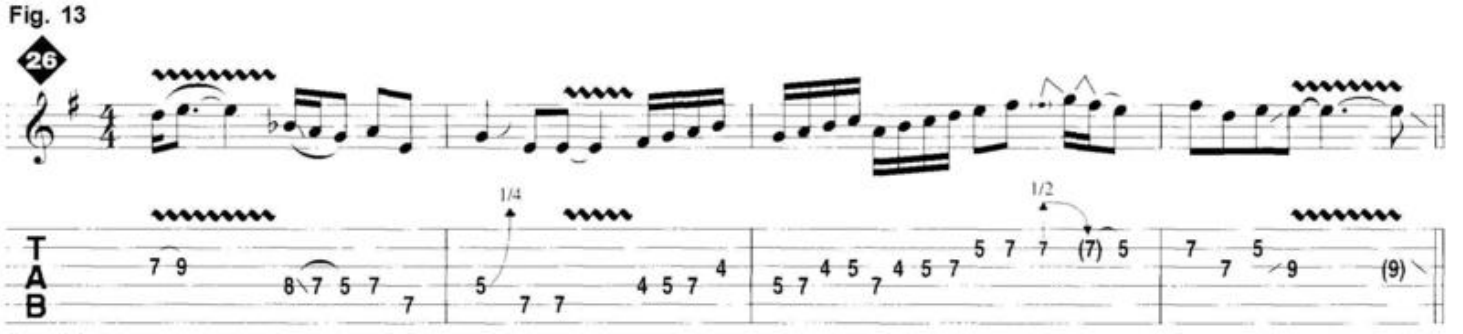



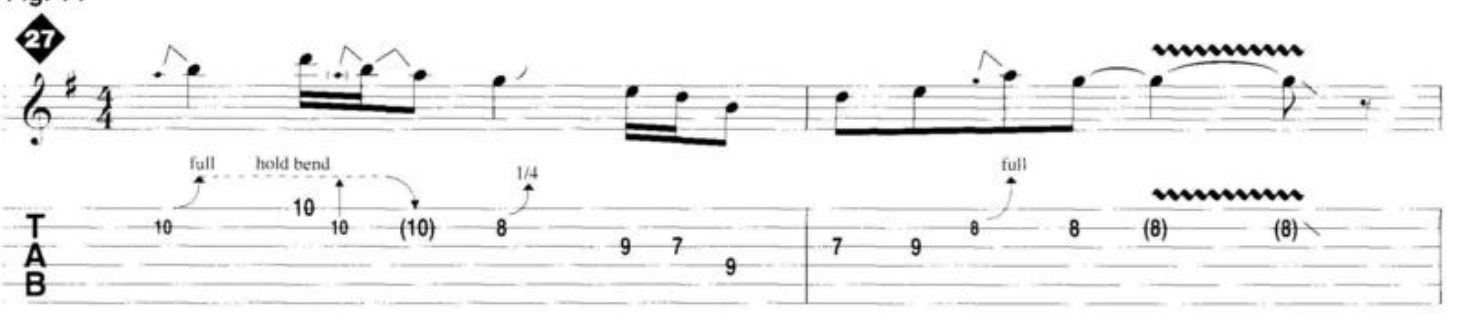
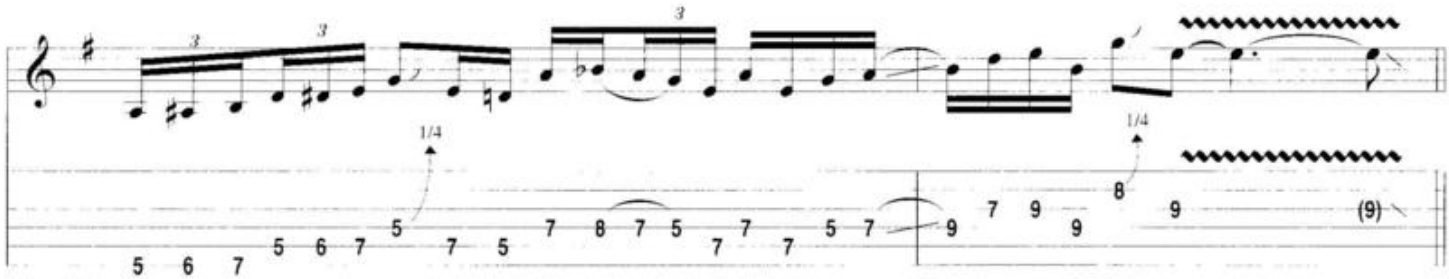
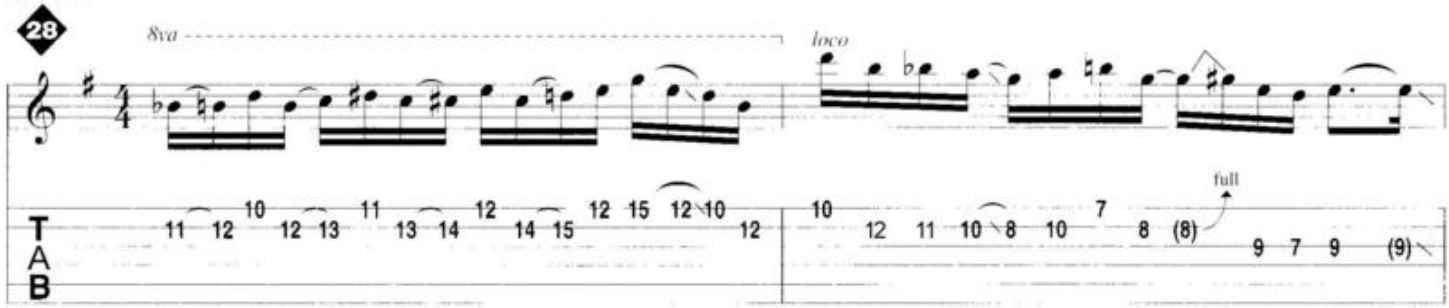
Fig. 14



Fig. 15



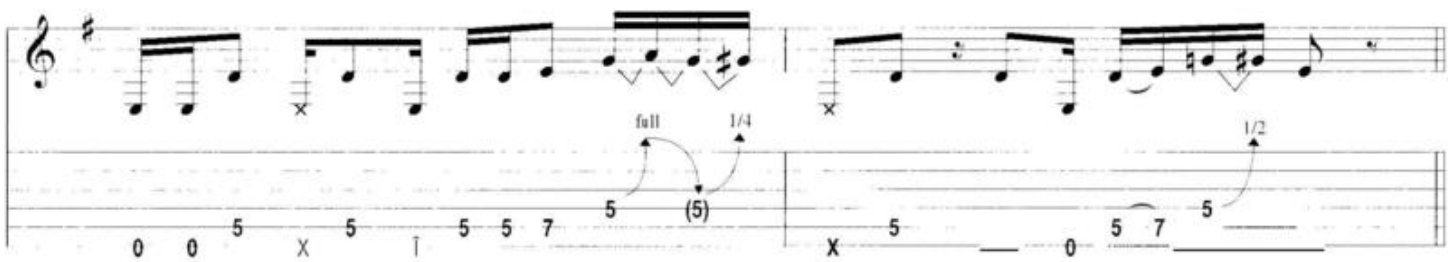
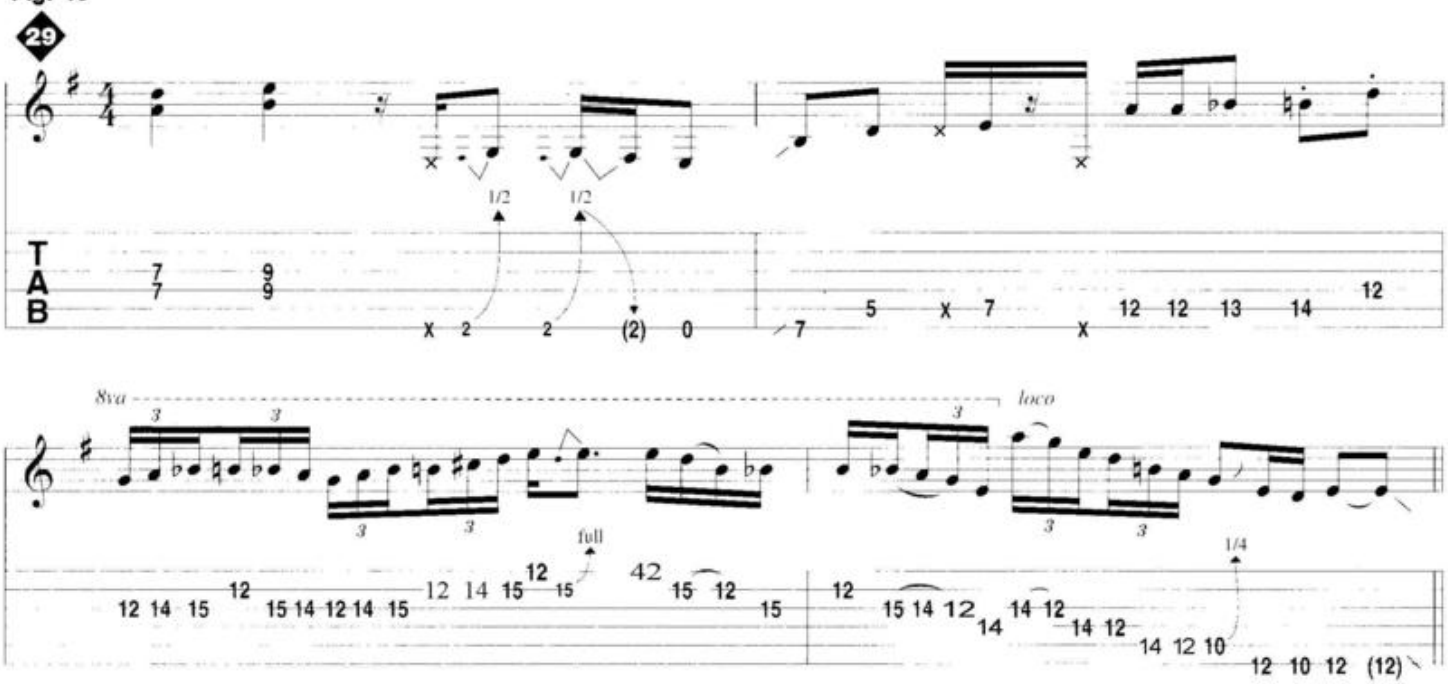


Fig. 16



Now let's try examples 13–16 straight through as a solo.

30 **Figures 13–16 as a solo**

CHAPTER 2

THREE-NOTE-PER-STRING

In this chapter we're going to expose you to *three-note-per-string scales.* These patterns should help fill in

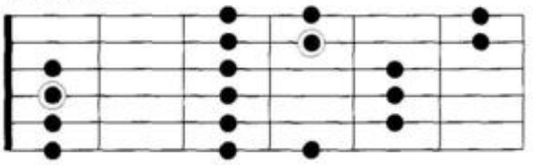
scale, any scale can be played as a three-note-per-string scale. For the purposes of this book, we're going to focus mainly on the diatonic scale. Once you feel comfortable with these seven shapes, take a look at the three-note-per-string shapes for the pentatonic and blues scales.

patterns—

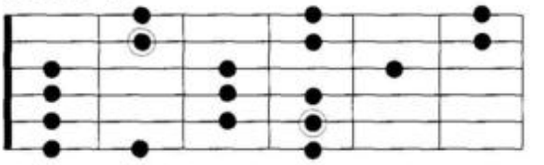
ic scale patterns with the G.I.T. numbering system. Rather than naming the three-note-per-string patterns 1 through 7 (which would seem easiest), we've named them to match the five patterns presented in *Rock Lead Basics* and all other M.I. Press books.

17:

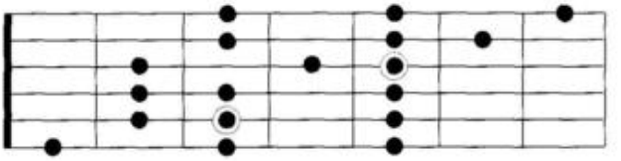
Pattern 1A



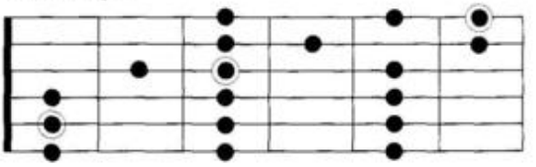
Pattern 1B



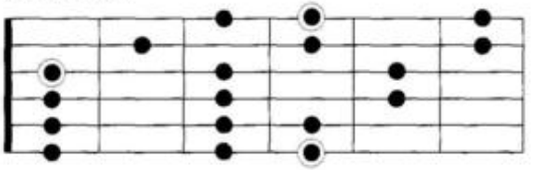
Pattern 2



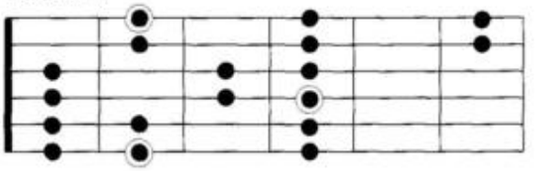
Pattern ÇÀ



Pattern 3B



Pattern 4



Pattern 5

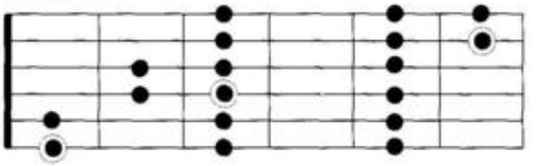
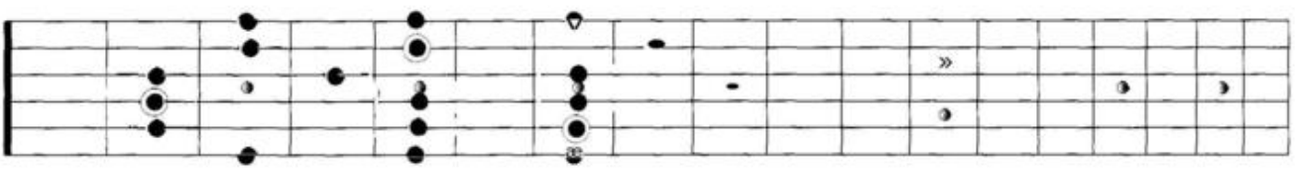
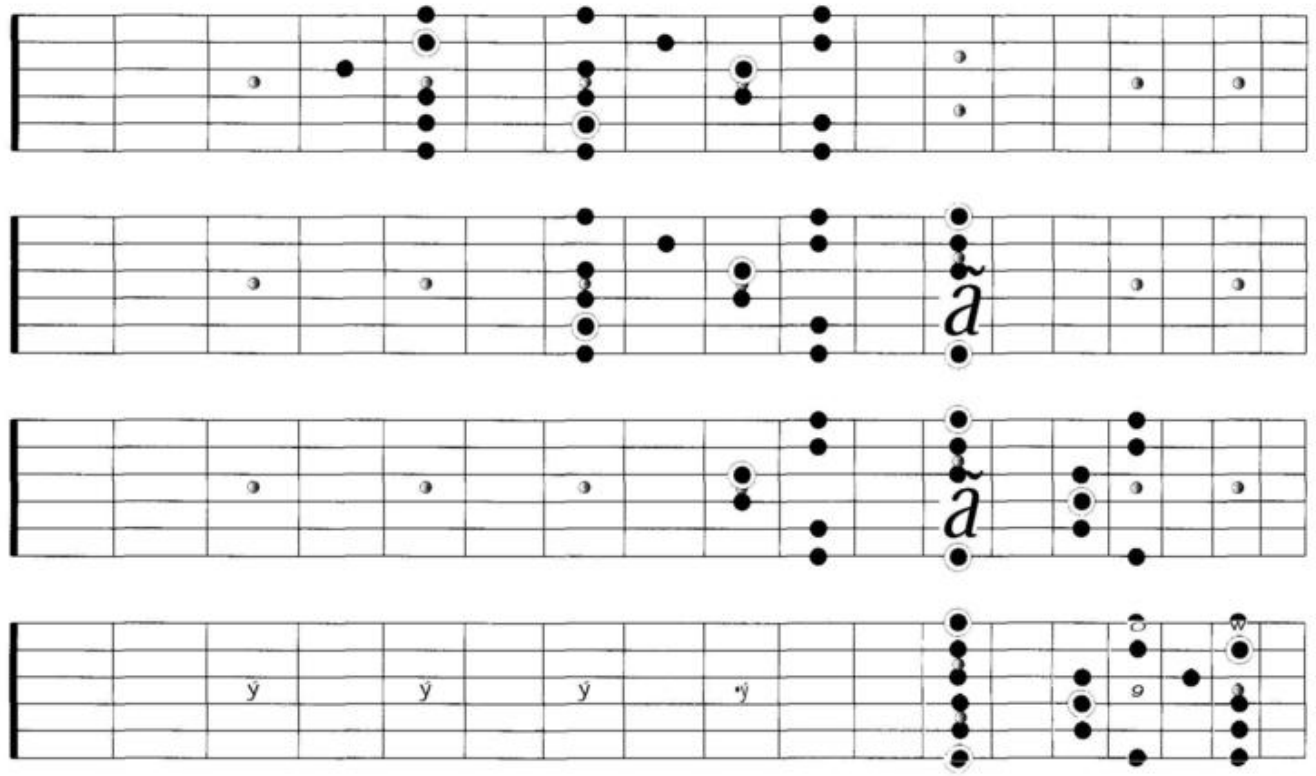
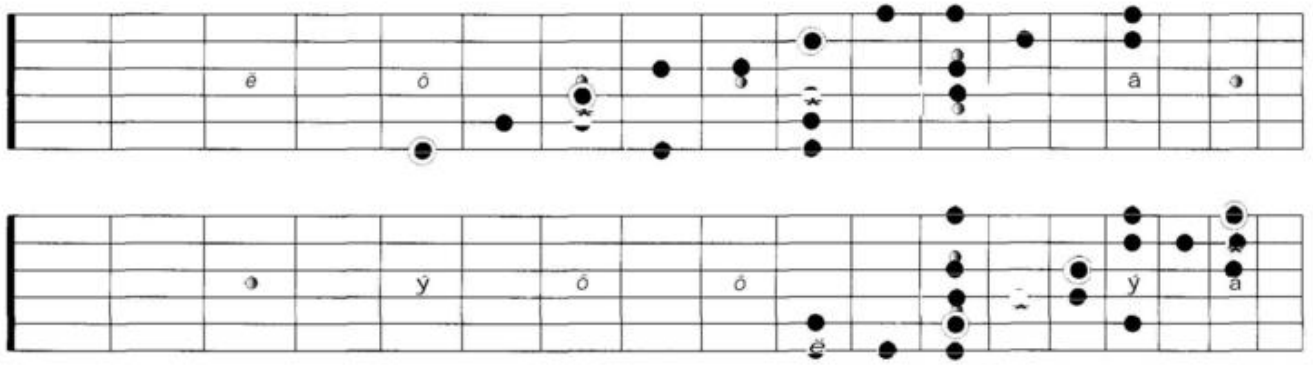


Fig. 18: E minor pentatonic three-note-per-string scales



Here's something a little different—the blues scale on three notes per string. These are the two most
♭5).

Fig. 19: Three-note-per-string A blues scale



CHAPTER 3

PICKING LICKS

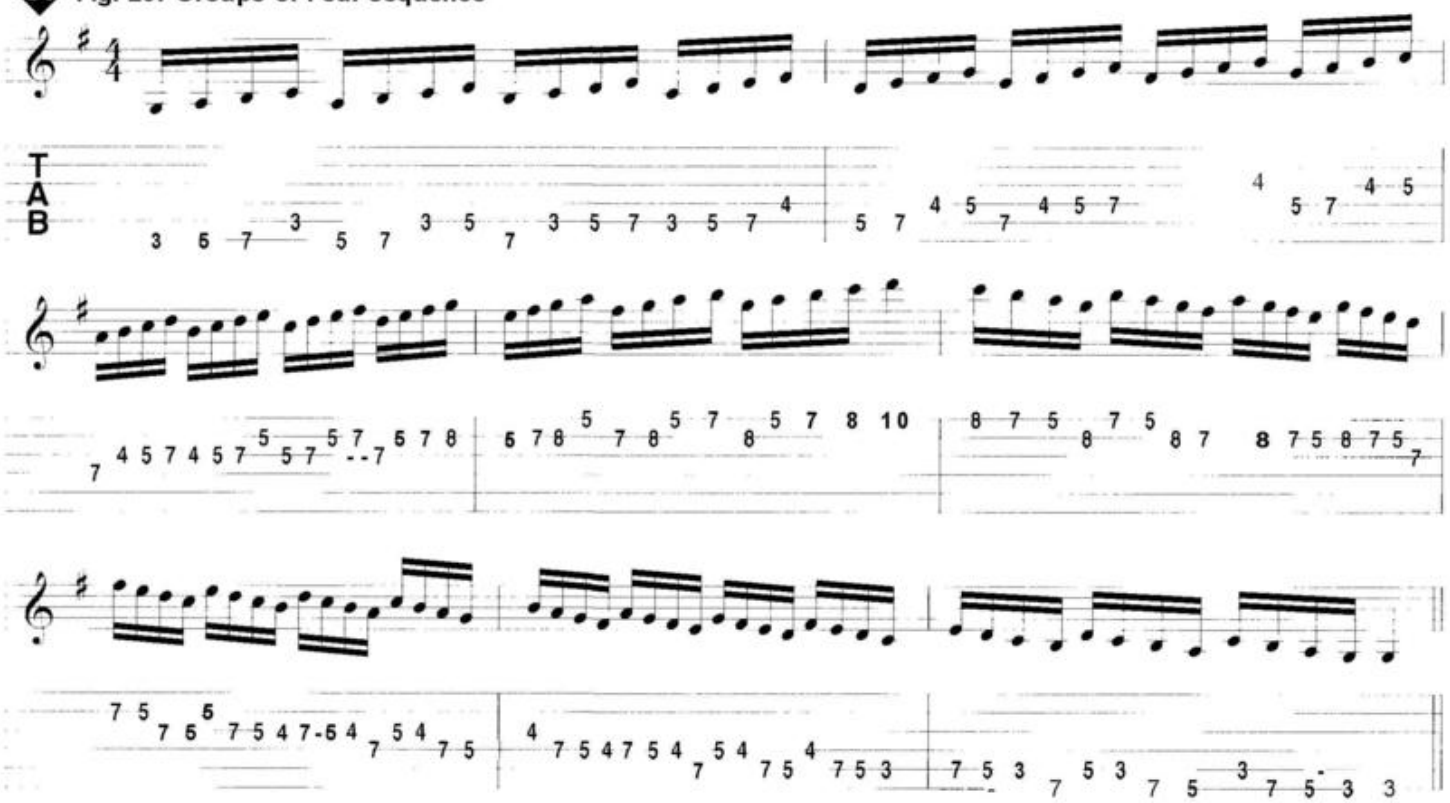
Sequences

D exactly what they were doing. What is a *sequence?* A sequence is an arrangement of notes with a

free to make up your own.

like this: 1-2-3-4, 2-3-4-5, 3-4-5-6, etc. Here it is in G Major, using pattern 5:

31 Fig. 20: Groups of Four sequence

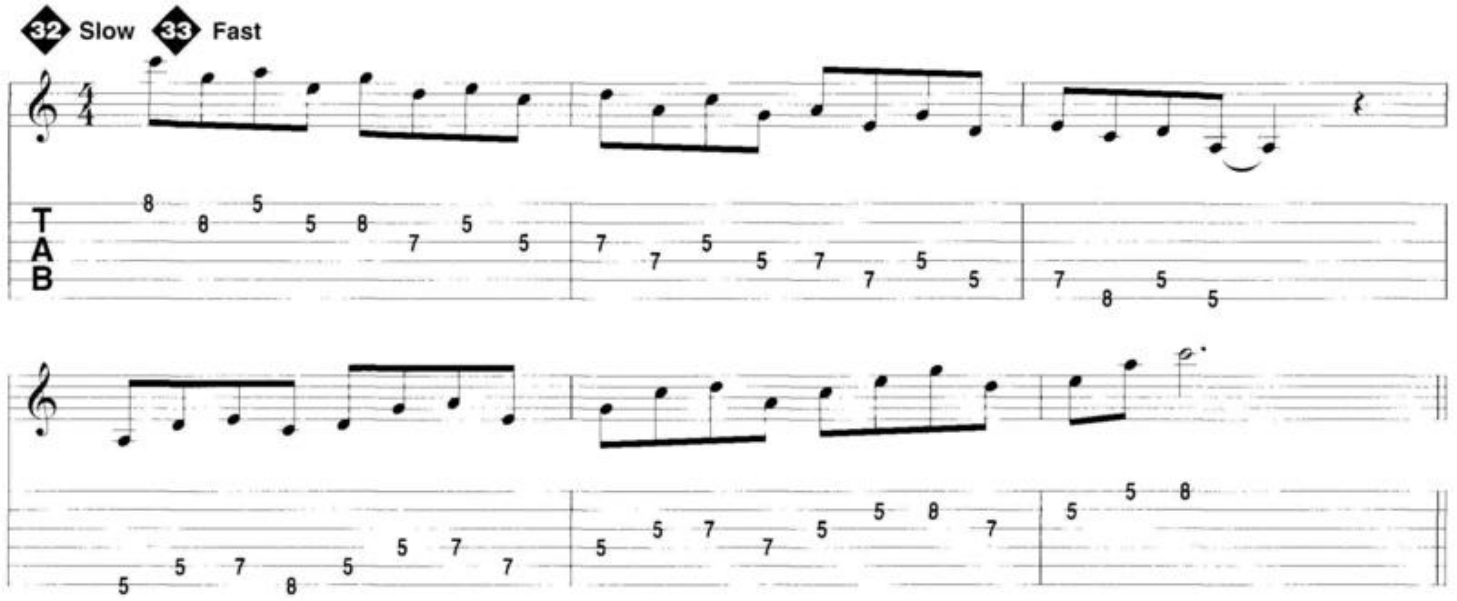


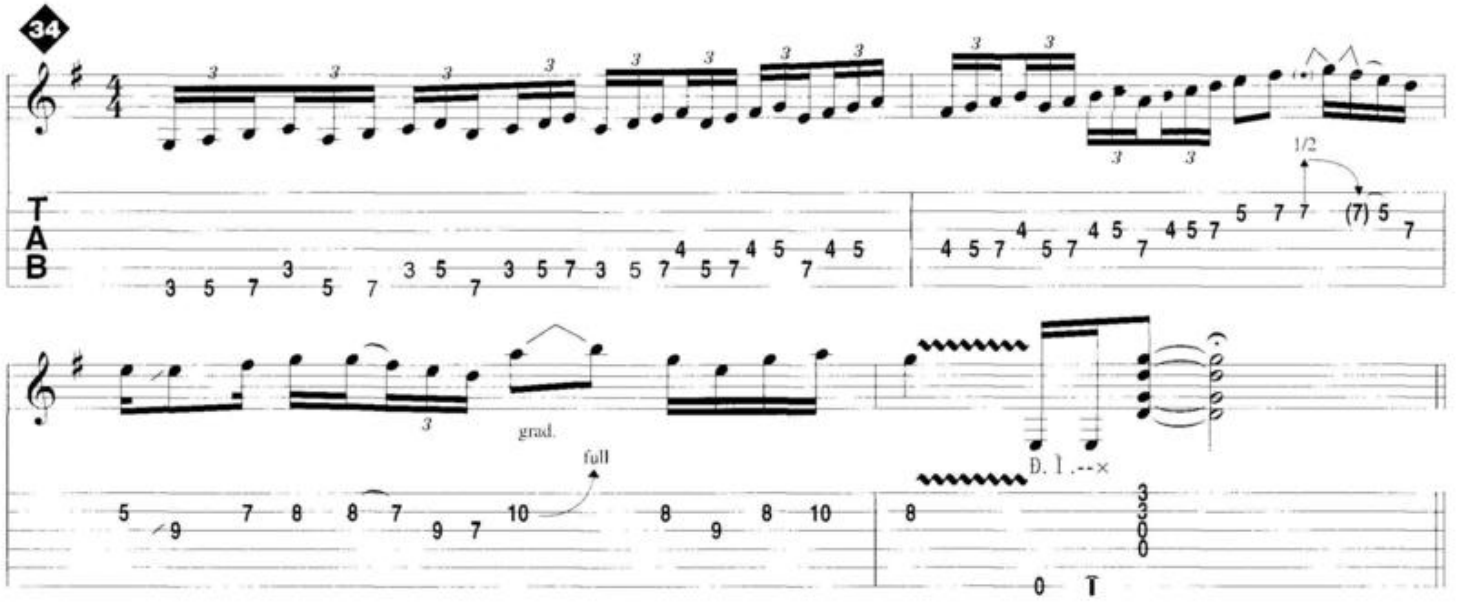
When working on the above sequence you'll notice something that is a bit difficult: the eighth and ninth notes in measure 3—these notes are both on the fifth fret, on *different* strings (this also happens with the twelfth and thirteenth notes in the same measure). This is a tough situation. Some people try to fret both notes at the same time, but the sequence ends up sounding sloppy because both notes ring out. Other people fret one note, then lift their finger off and *jump* to the next note. This is too slow. Try rolling your finger (in

semi-flat—

(without letting any pressure off the fingerboard).

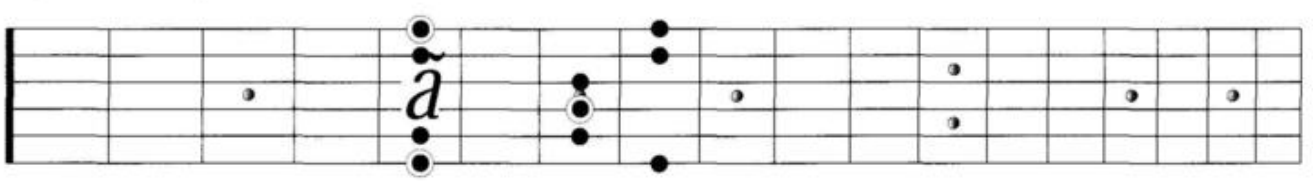
The following is a rolling lick. Be sure to follow the steps from the previous page. The goal is to not jump

Fig.

Here's a lick that uses some tough sequencing... good luck!



Let's try a Pentatonic sequence. Here's the A Minor Pentatonic Scale:

Fig. 23: A minor pentatonic minor scale

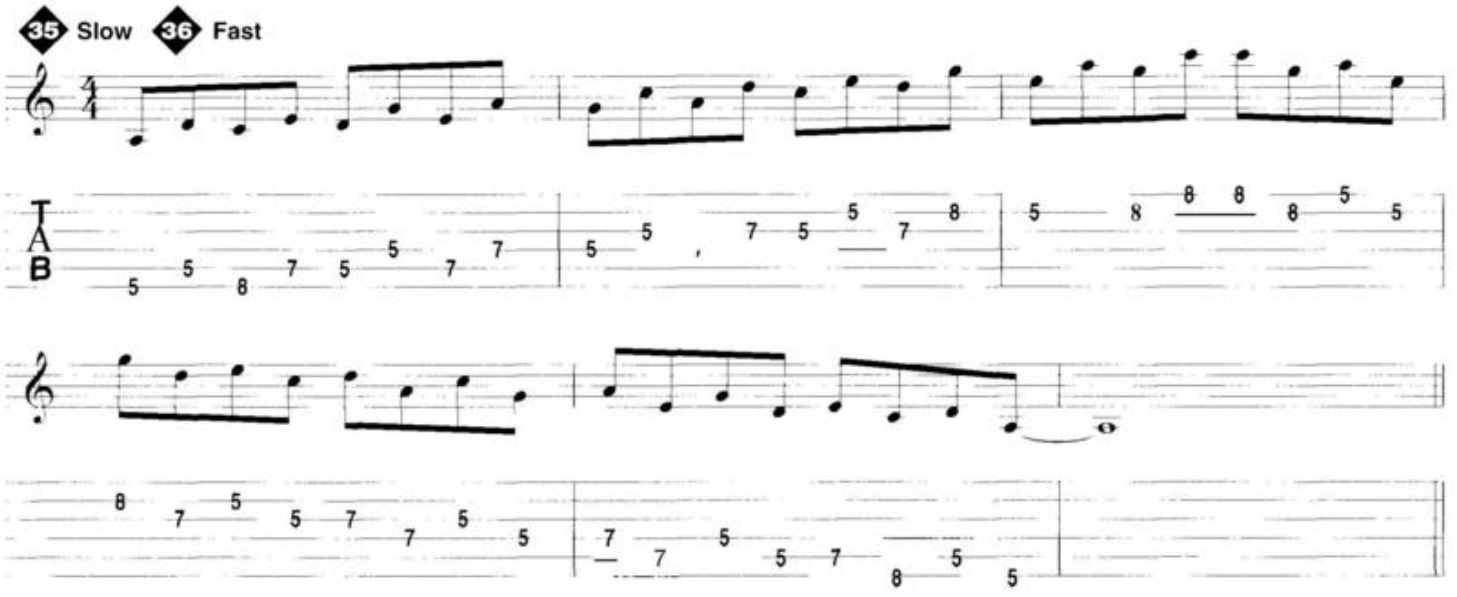


In this first example I'm going to ascend the scale in thirds. If you understand this concept on paper it lows:

A-C-D-E-G-(A)

If we ascend in thirds (every other note), we get the following sequence:

Fig. 24



This sequence starts on the third note of A minor pentatonic (D) and then plays back down the scale to the first note (A). Continue this group-of-three sequence until you reach the top of the A minor pentatonic scale. Figure 25 shows this sequence, along with a good way to come back down. Take a listen to the CD and try it yourself.

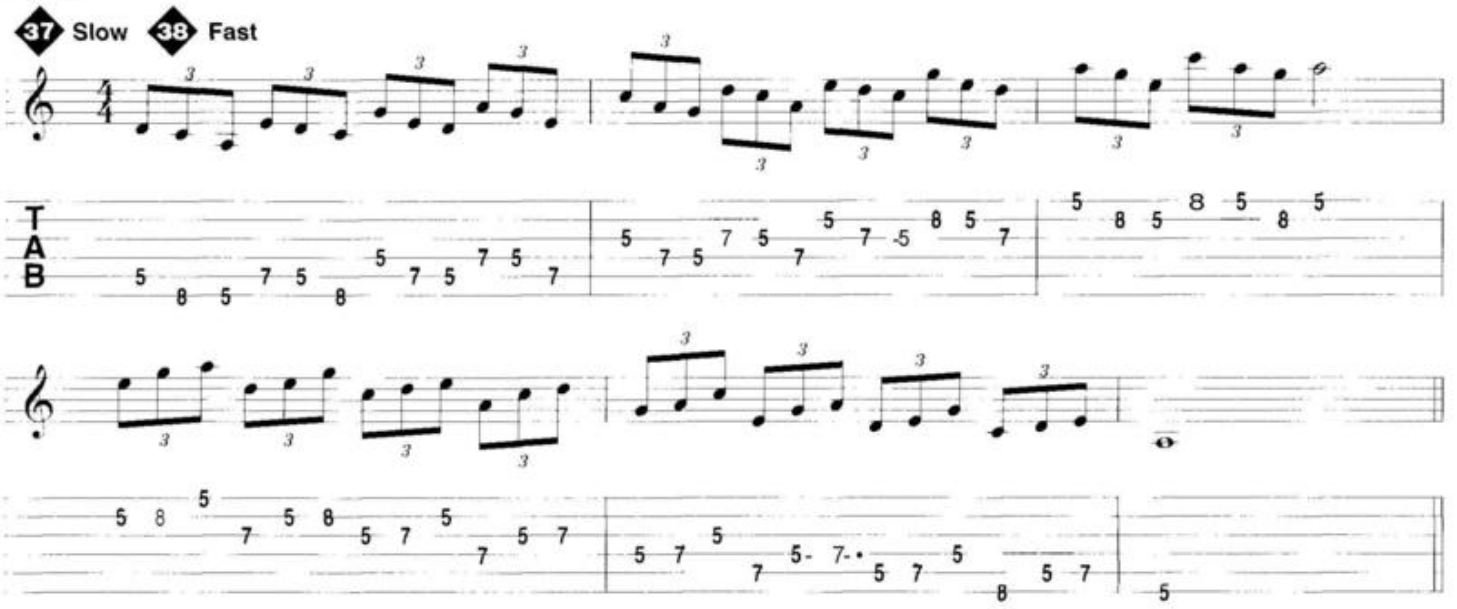
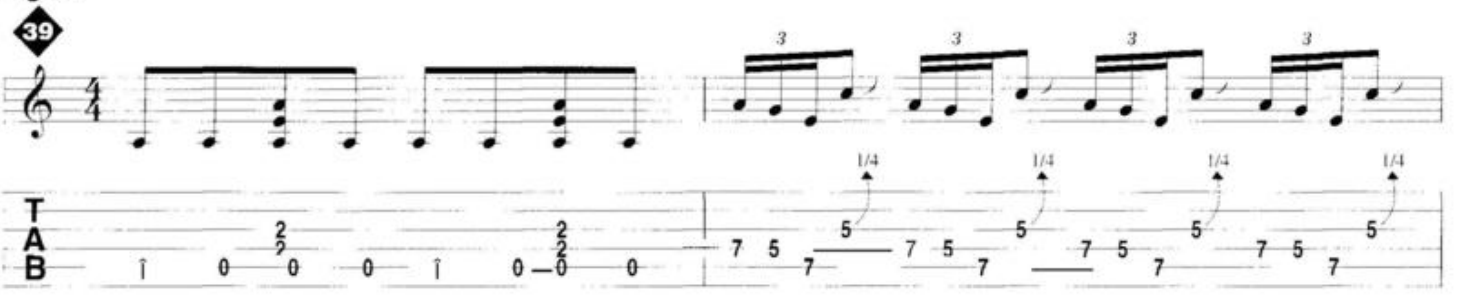
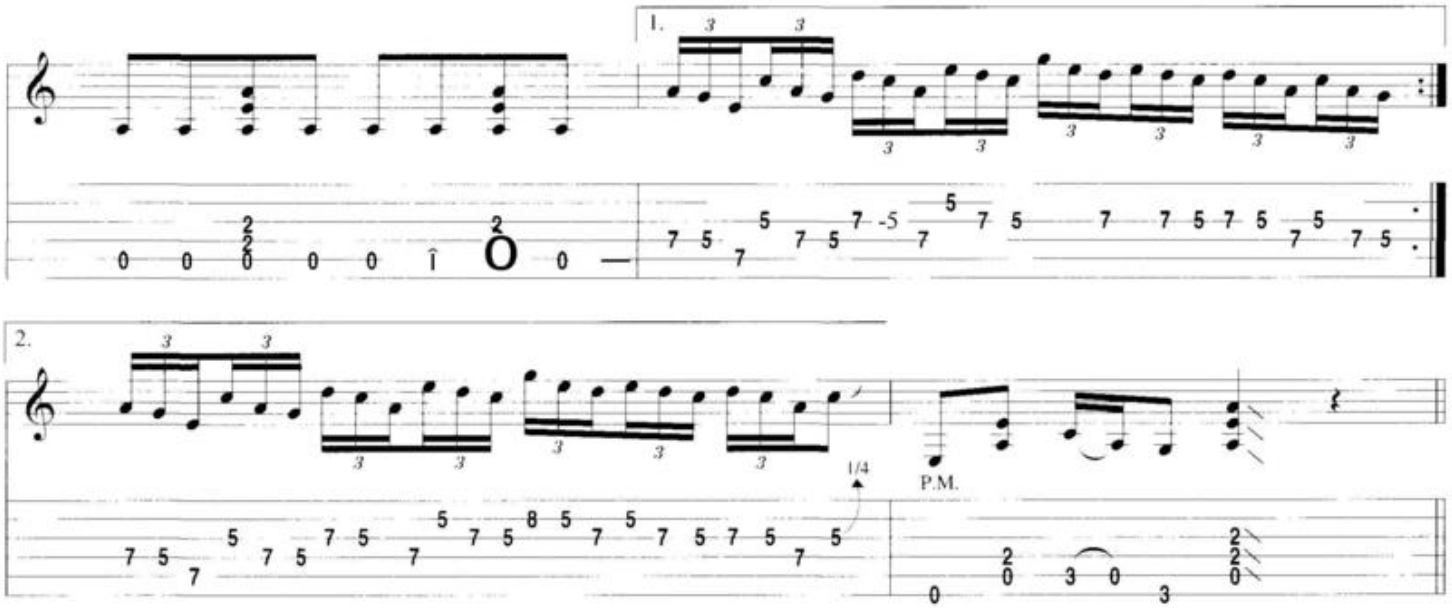
Fig. 25

As you learn these new sequences, its a good idea to try and throw little bits of them into your playing. Notice how figure 26 uses this group-of-three pattern over a riff in A.

Fig. 26



Now let's try a lick using a group-of-four sequence with the A blues scale. Remember: the A blues scale is the same as the minor pentatonic scale with the addition of the ♭5.

Fig. 27: A blues scale

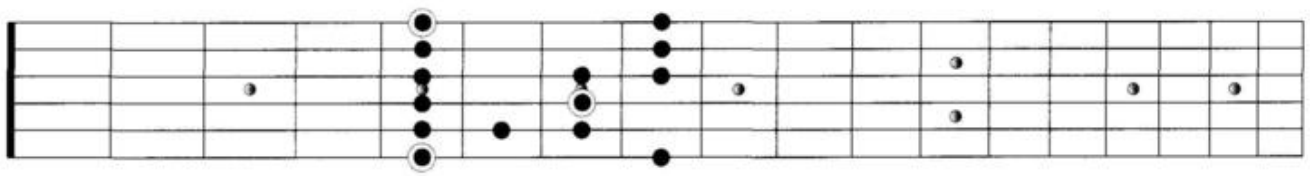


Fig. 28

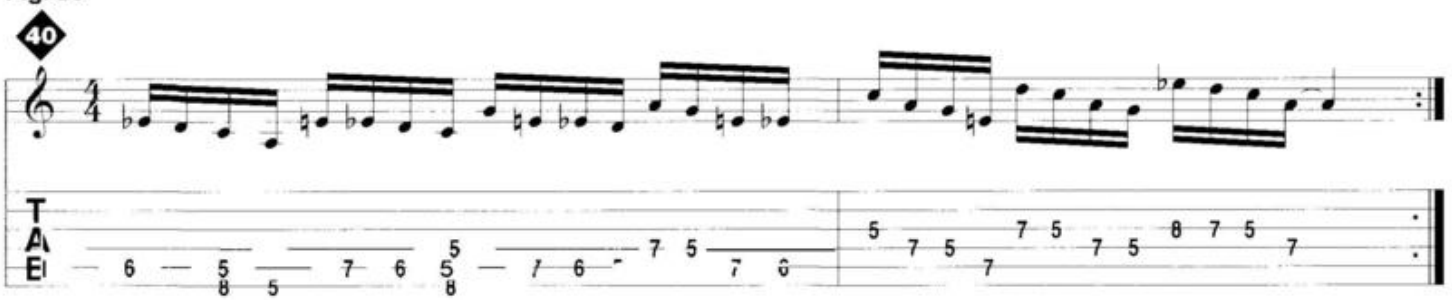
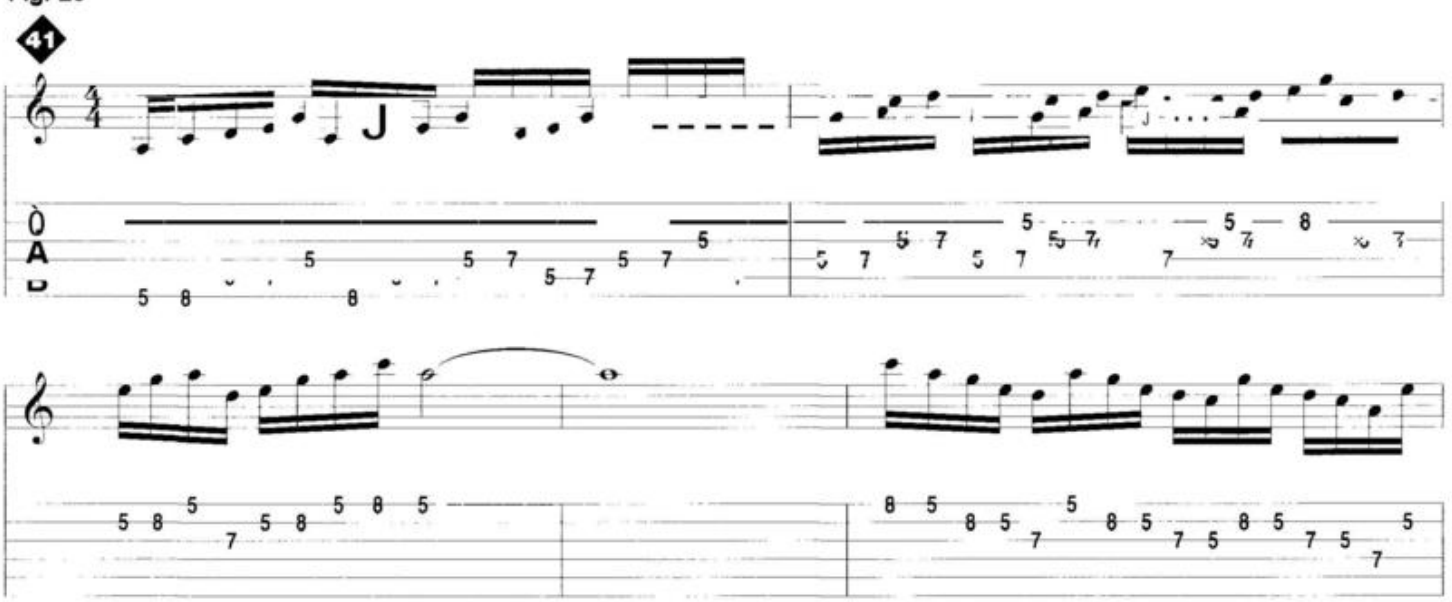
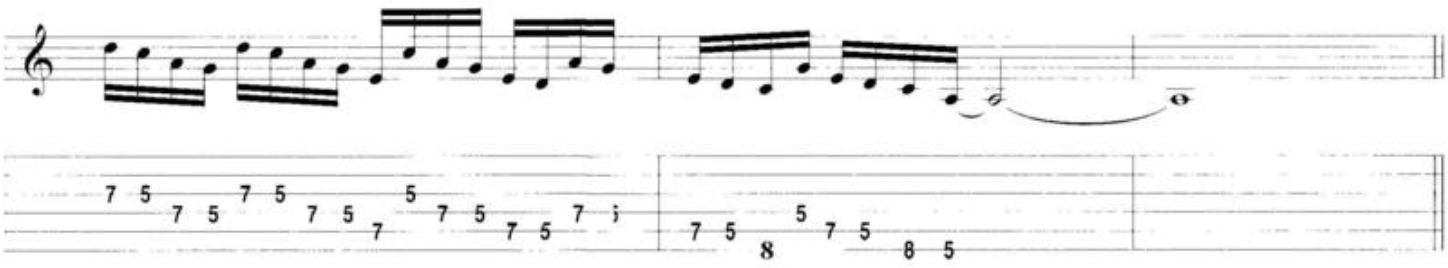



Fig. 29



Now let's get back to the diatonic scale. These next two examples take advantage of the three-note-

strings to complete each sequence. It's a lot easier when broken down into pairs of strings. All six strings at once can be overwhelming.

Fig.

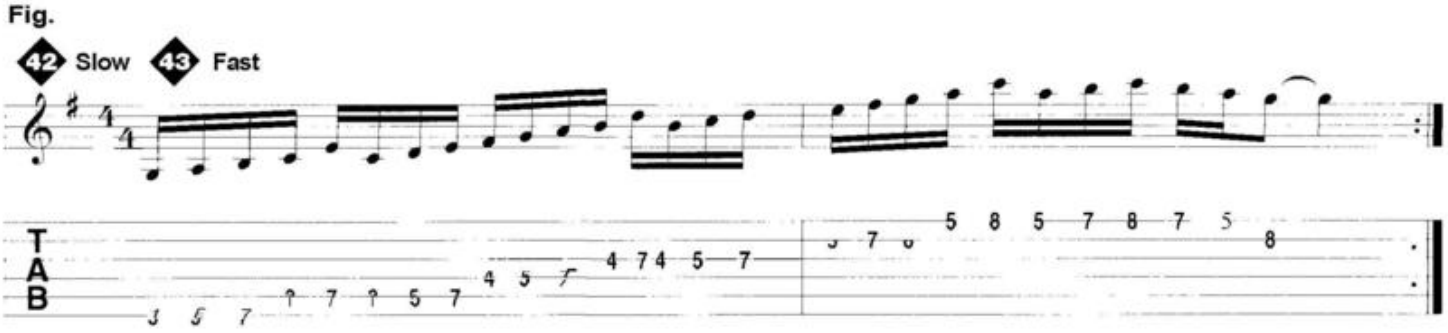
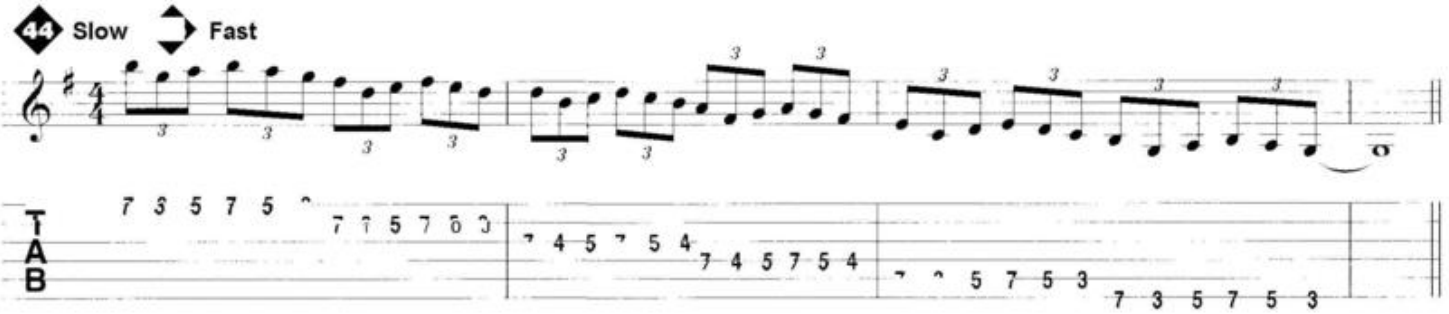
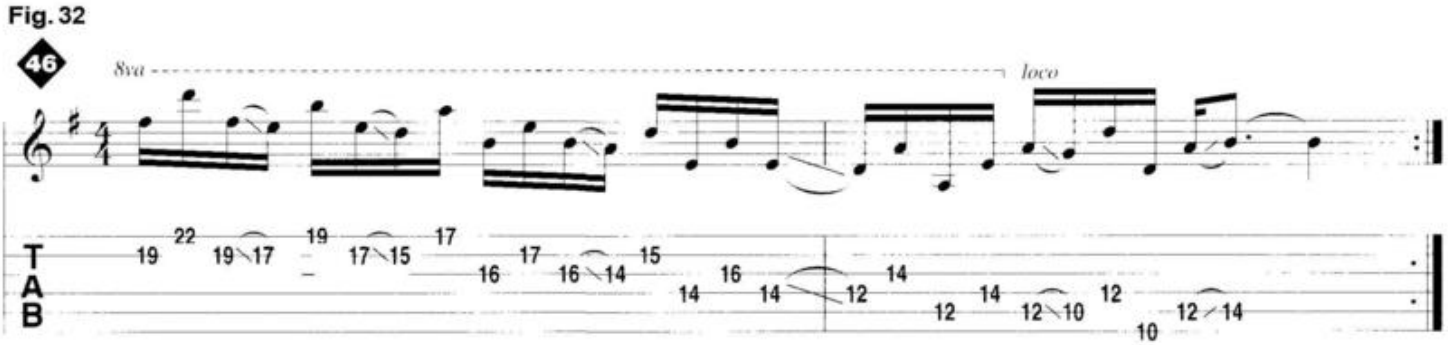



Fig.31

Licks

If we shorten up a sequence and repeat a few notes we get some *licks*. Here are a few of my favorites. The first one combines descending fifths and fourths in E minor. Watch out for those first finger slides!

Fig. 32



47 **Now check it out with the band.**

The blue note (♭5) can be a great addition to your licks—both diatonic and pentatonic. These next two

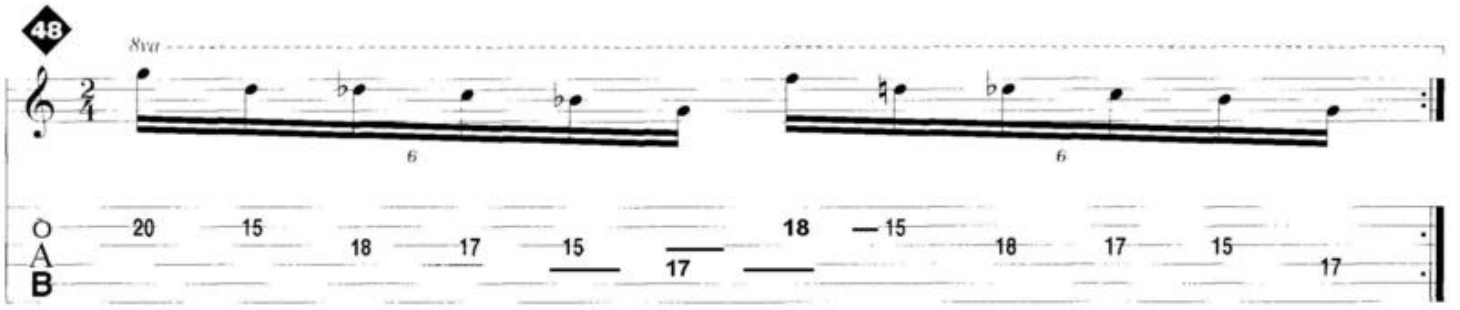
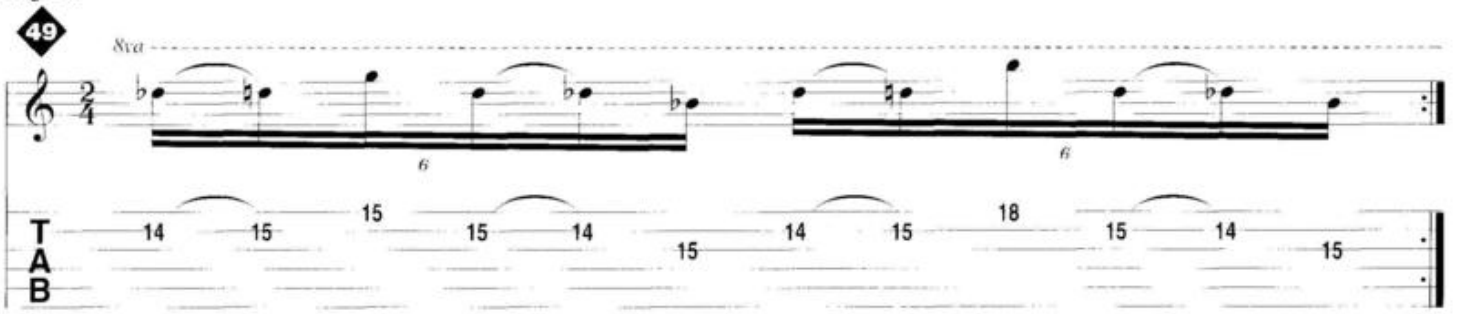


Fig. 34



String Skipping

String skipping is one of the hardest picking techniques. Not only do you have to jump the extra distance between the strings—you also have to figure out how to keep the unwanted strings quiet while you jump across them. However, if you can pull off a great string-skipping lick at the right time and place, you will

peers—Ed McMahon

$1,000,000!

As always, start slowly and play cleanly and evenly.

We'll start off with an easy one using the E blues scale:

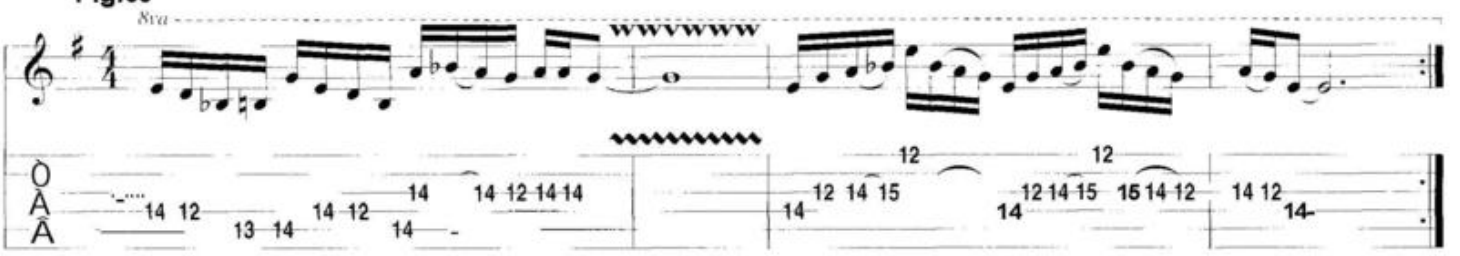
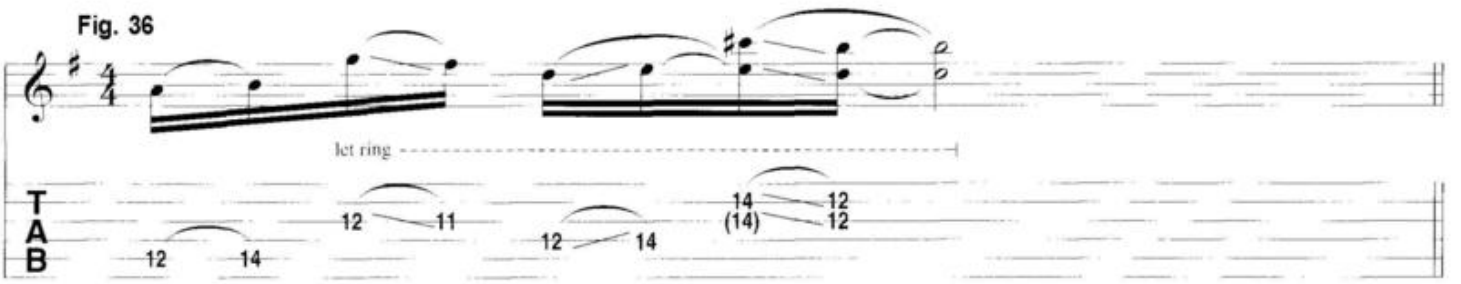
Fig.35

A sixth interval is a natural interval for string skipping:

Fig. 36



Here's a longer idea in E major.

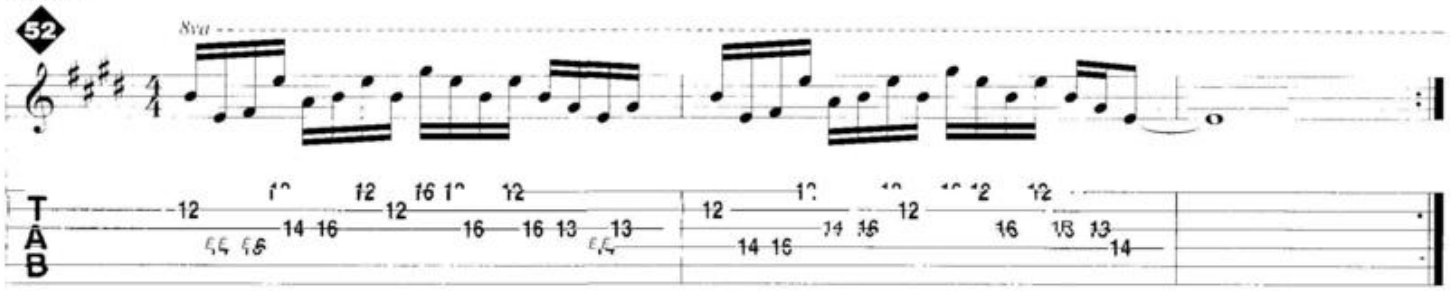
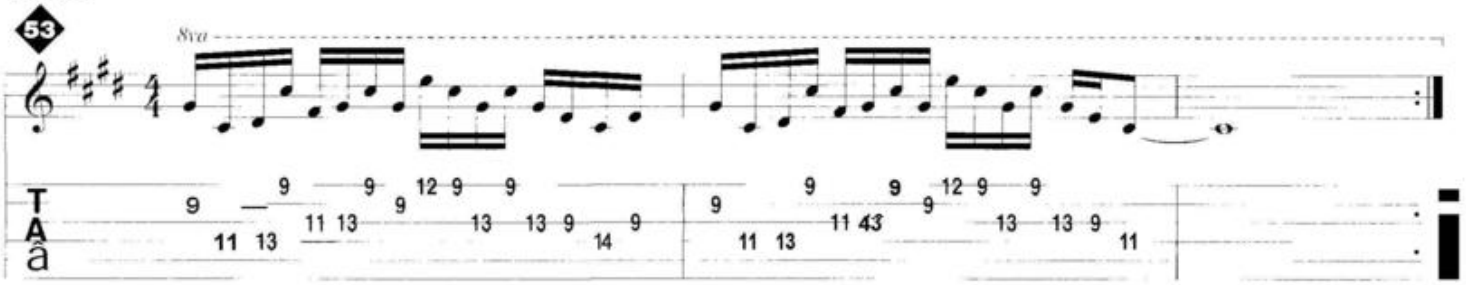
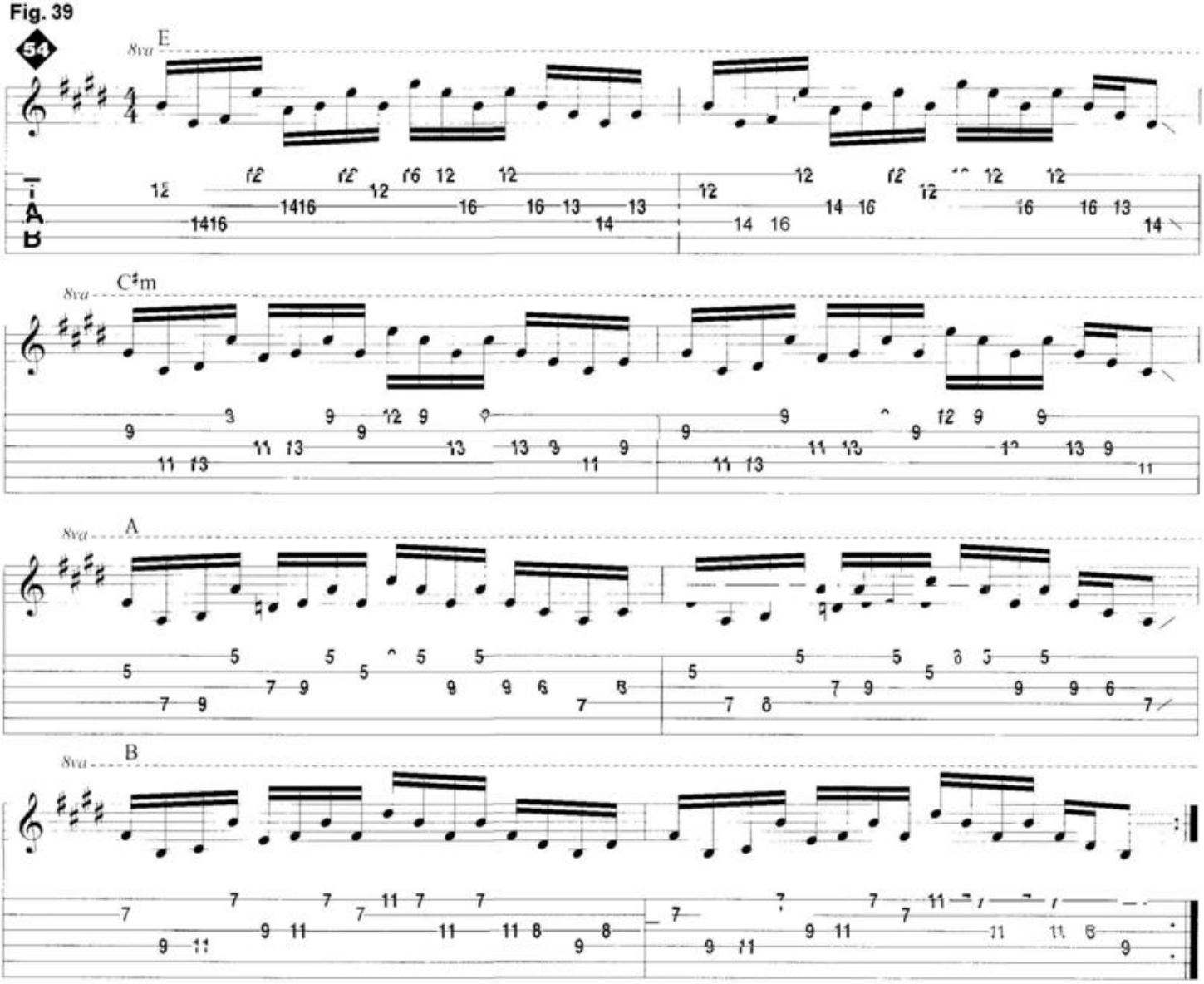
Fig. 37

C♯ minor—the

Fig. 38



pening!

Fig. 39

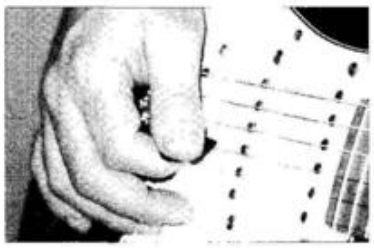


55 **Now you try it with the band.**

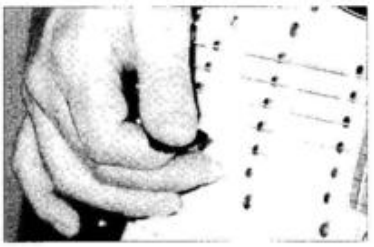
Fingerpicking

Fingerpicking or "Chicken Pickin'" is a technique that has crossed over from country guitar to rock. It can add a lot to your playing and make many licks easier to play. If you still don't know what "Chicken Pickin'"

The concept is simple. Watch the series of pictures below.



Use your pick as you normally would.



Pluck your finger upward. It's o.k. to snap the string. In fact, it sounds cool.

Let's get started with an easy one. Try the figure below. The notes with the "m" over them are meant to be plucked with your middle finger. The "m" comes from classical guitar notation:

p (pulgar) = thumb

m (medio) = middle finger

a (anular) = ring finger

Fig. 40

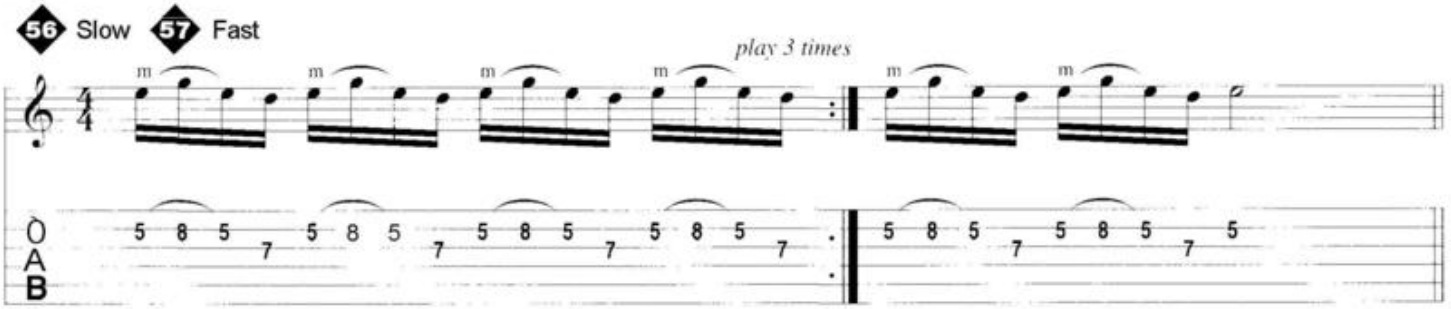
56 Slow 57 Fast

Here's another; this one is a bit more demanding.

Fig. 41

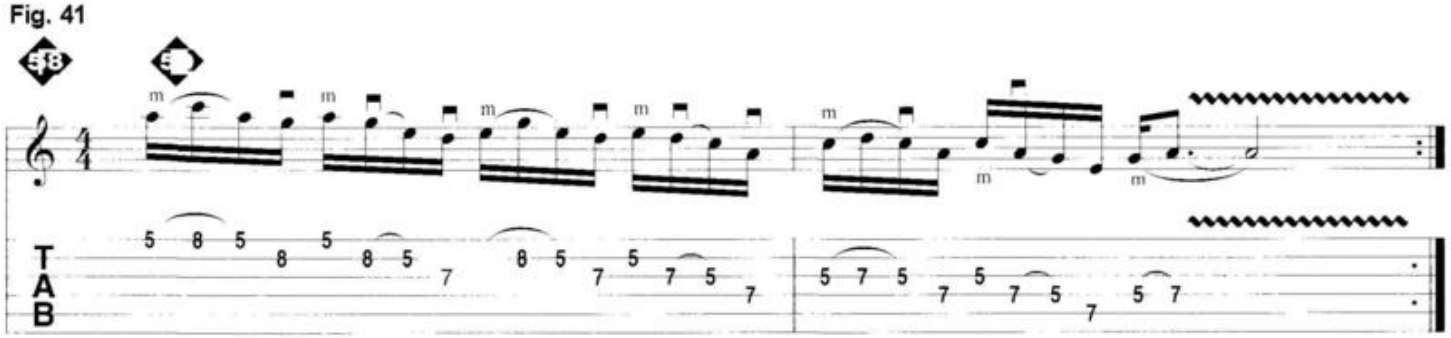
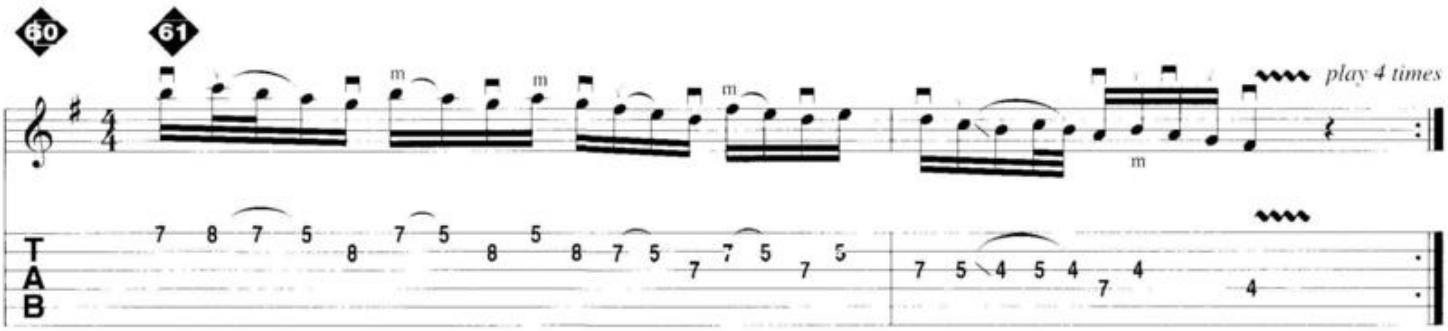


Fig. 42

This is the E Mixolydian scale in inverted thirds (There'll be more about the Mixolydian scale in the next book.

and your middle finger plucking the first string.

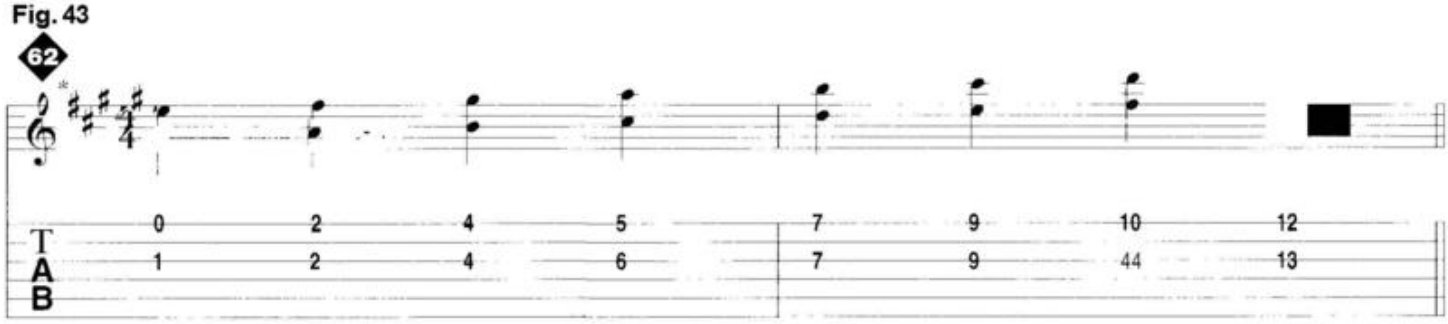
Fig. 43

*Key signature denotes E Mixolydian

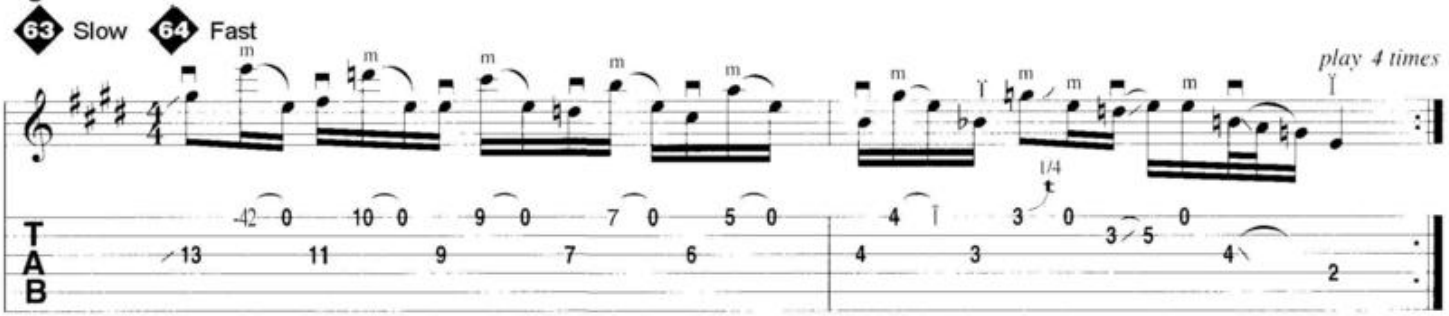
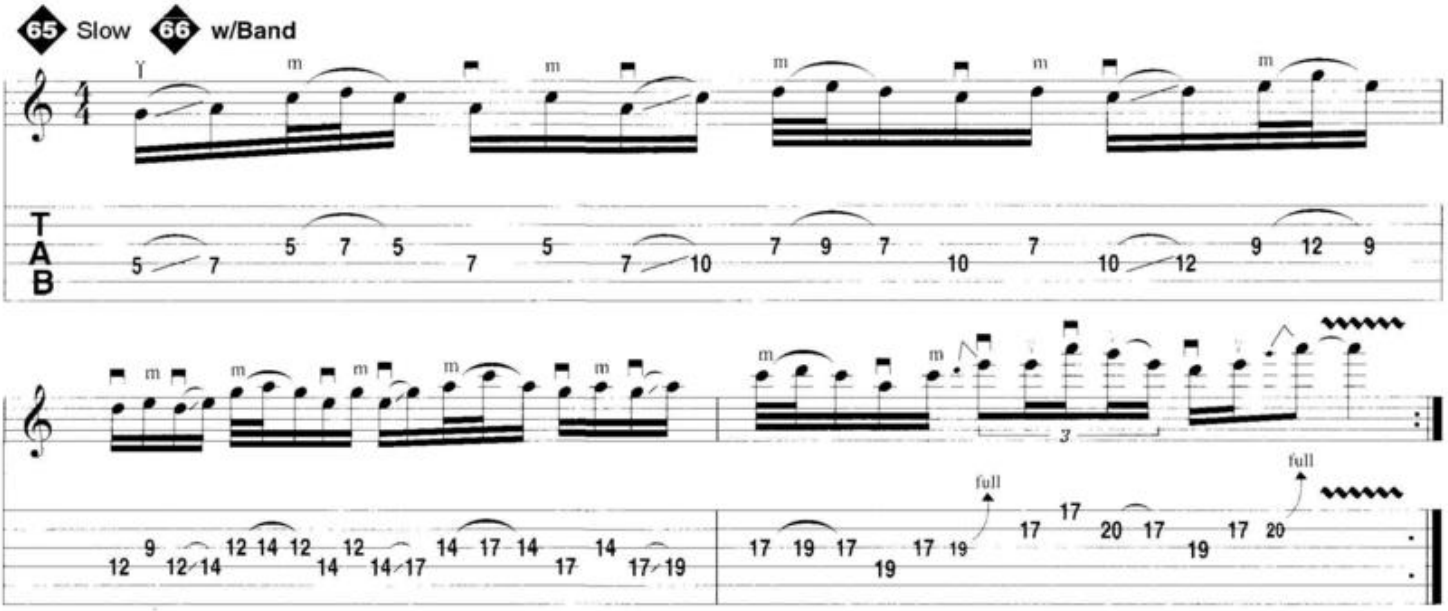
Fig. 44

Finally, here's a way to travel the whole neck using fingerpicking.

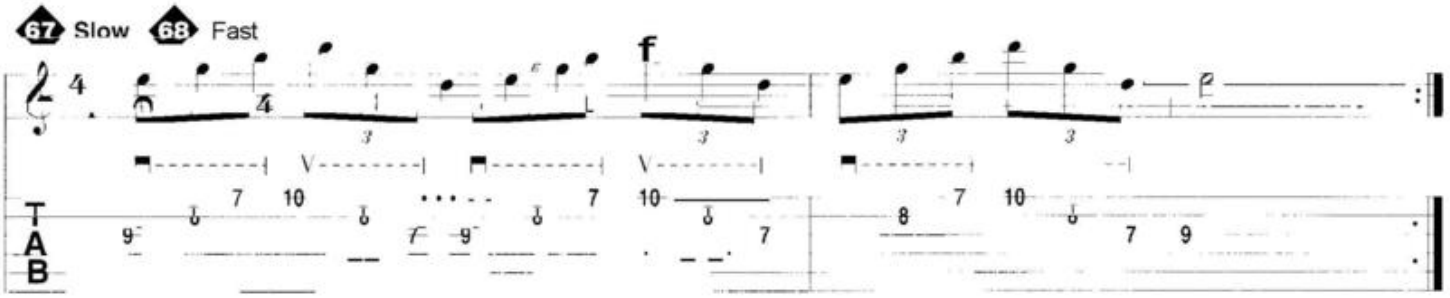
Fig. 45



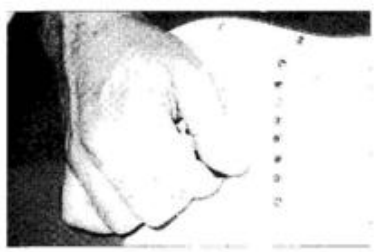
CHAPTER 4

Simply stated, *sweep picking* is the technique where your pick moves in one direction across a set of strings; it is the opposite technique of alternate picking. Sounds easy right? It can be, but the hard part ply sound like chords!

Let's get right into it. Start slowly and play cleanly.

Fig.

With your picking hand, strike the

As you ascend the first lick,



Without lifting up your pick, glide across the G string to the A string.

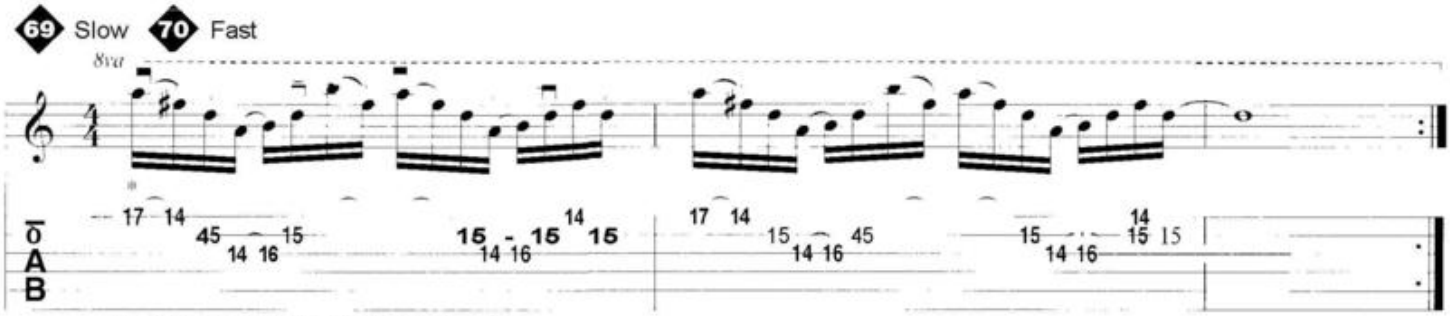
Continue this through to the

lick.
towards the ceiling, gliding smoothly across each string. Try not to lift up with

If you still sound sloppy, try *muting* heavily with the side of your picking hand. The easiest way to do this is to rest your picking hand at or near the bridge of the guitar. This will help anchor your picking hand and give you greater stability. (see picture below)

As a general rule when sweep picking, it is a good idea to use *hammer-ons* and *pull-offs* when you have

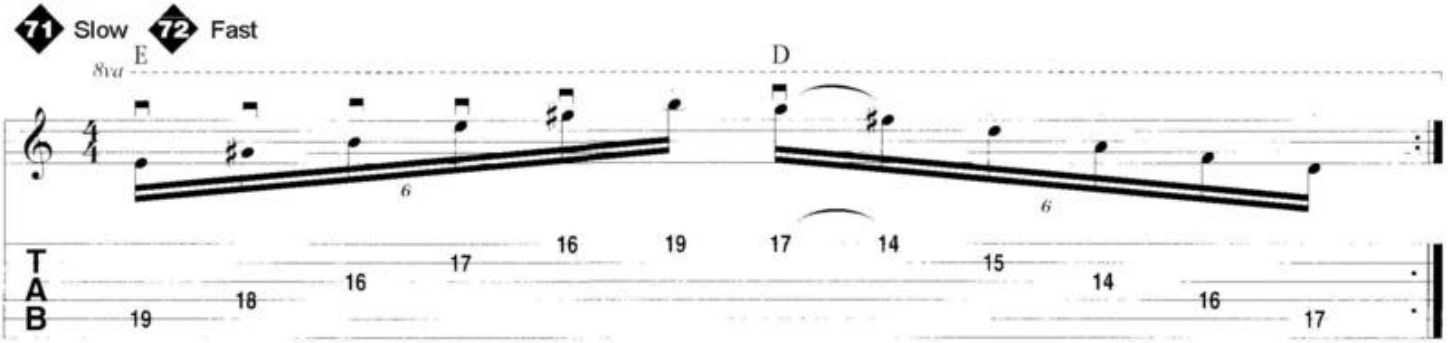
Fig. 47



*Pull-offs and hammer-ons appear only on track 70.

Now let's add a *slide* to a sweep lick. This lick will outline two major triad *arpeggios* — E major and D major (an arpeggio is defined as "the notes of a chord in scale form").

Fig. 48



Sweep picking is commonly associated with arpeggios because arpeggios often contain only one note per string. Here's a few of my favorites. I've included the fingerings because they have worked well for me,

Fig. 49: E Minor Arpeggio

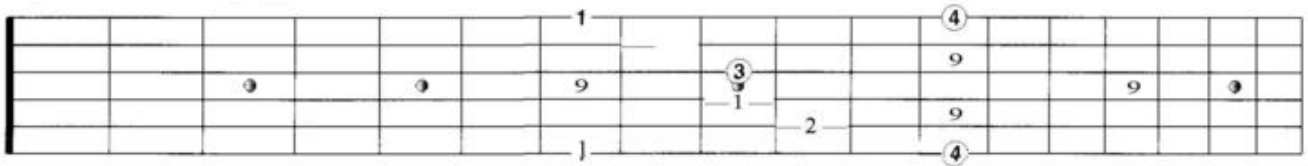


Fig. 50: E Minor 11 Arpeggio

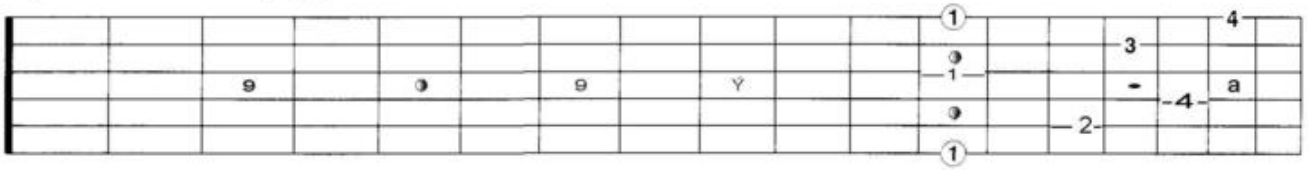
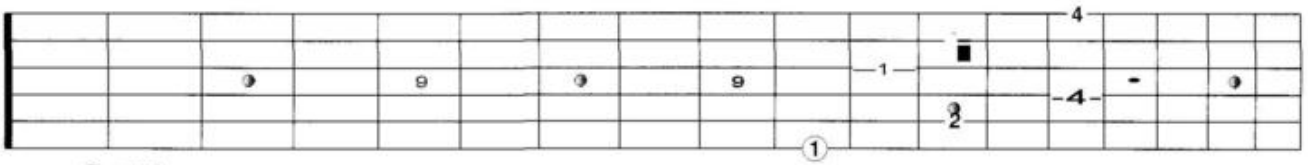
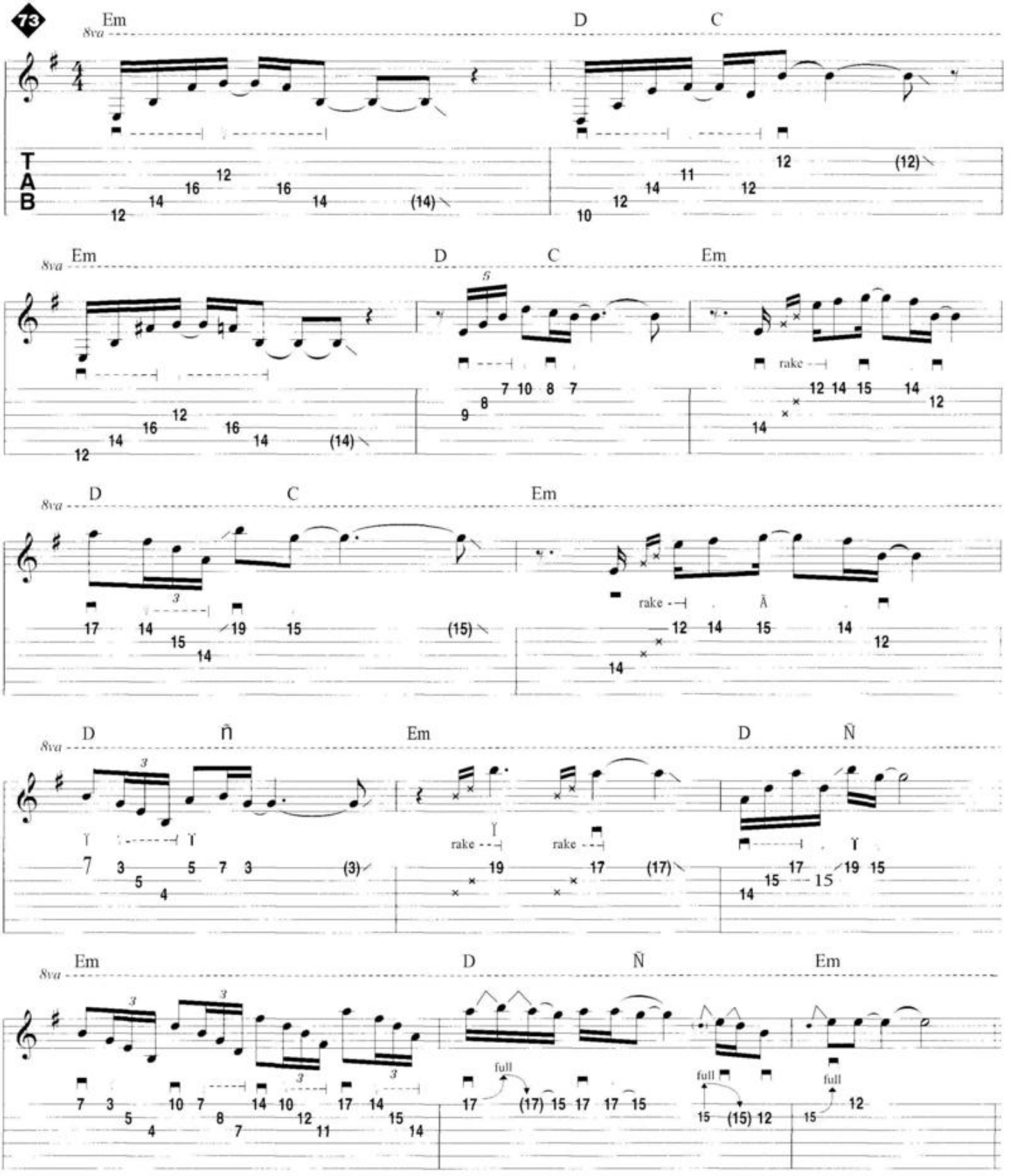


Fig. **51:** D_9^6 Arpeggio



○ = root

Fig. 52

chapter—or

own!

74 Fig. 53

arpeggios—the
we've played so far, but the sweep picking technique is the same.

Fig. 54: E7 Arpeggio

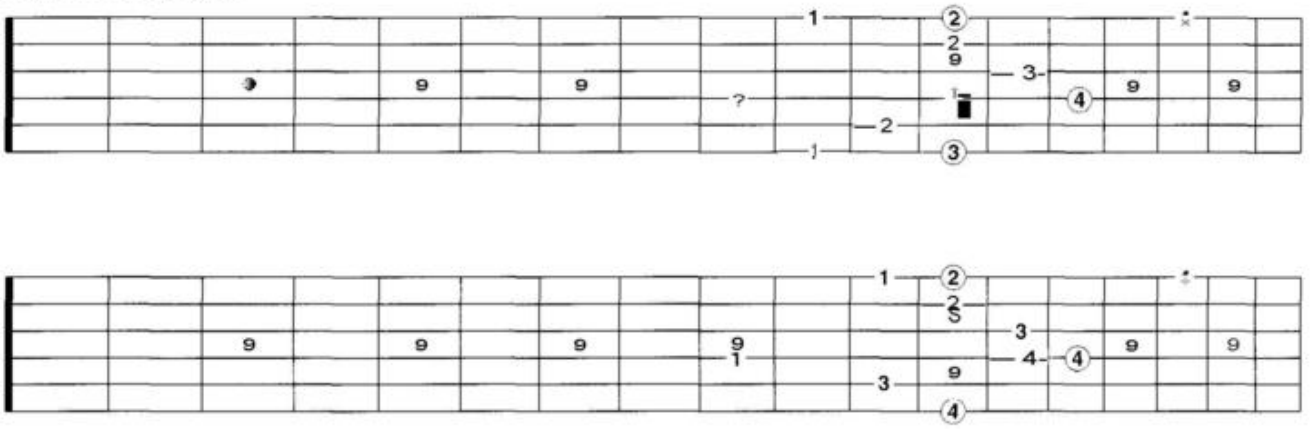


Fig. 56: A Major Arpeggio

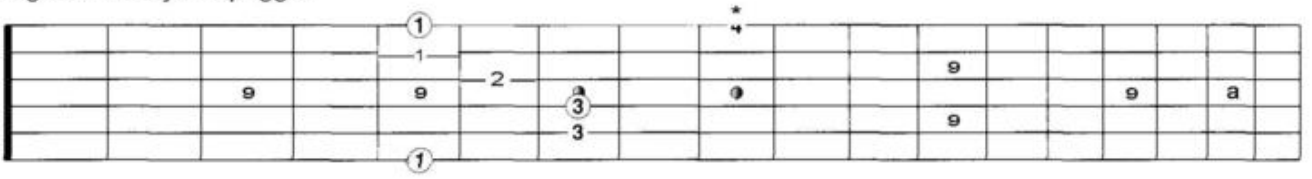
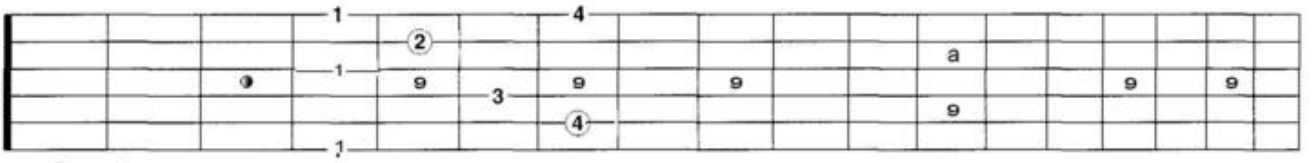
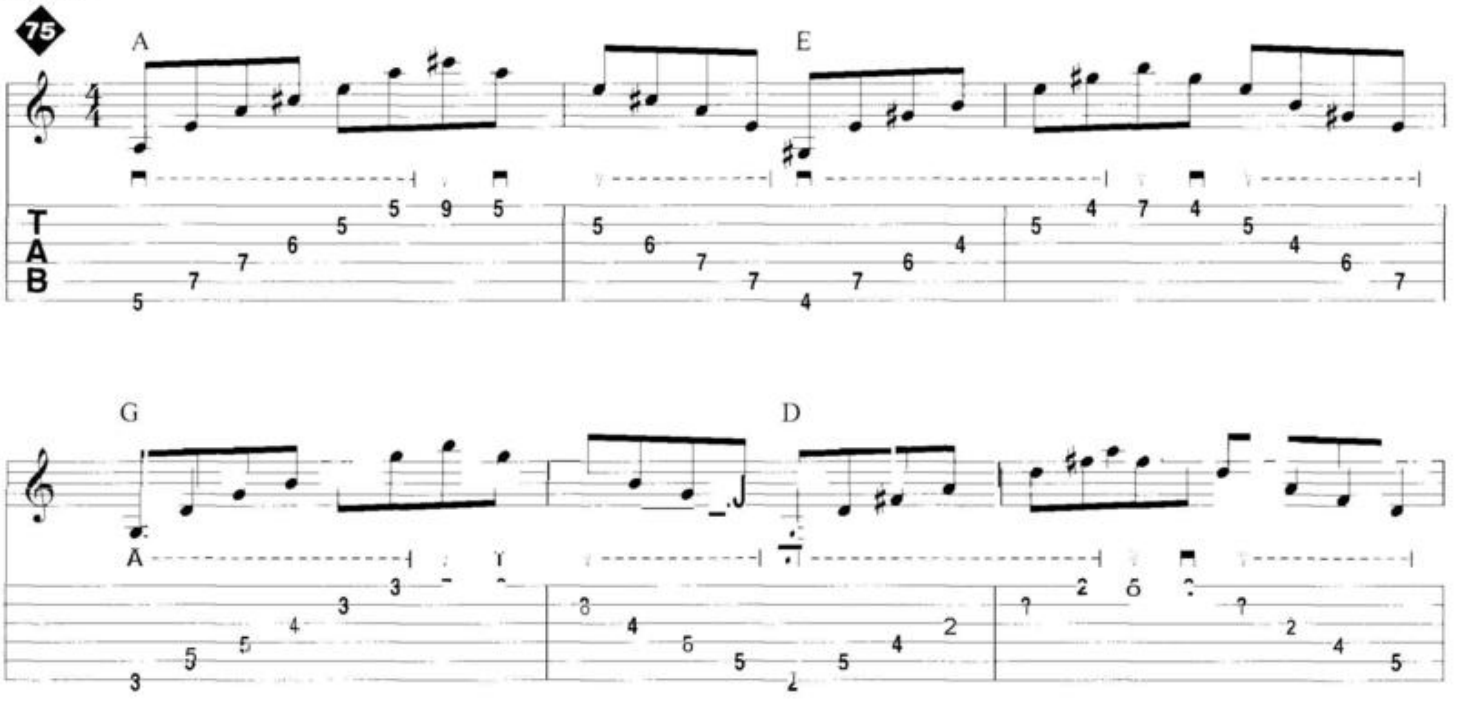
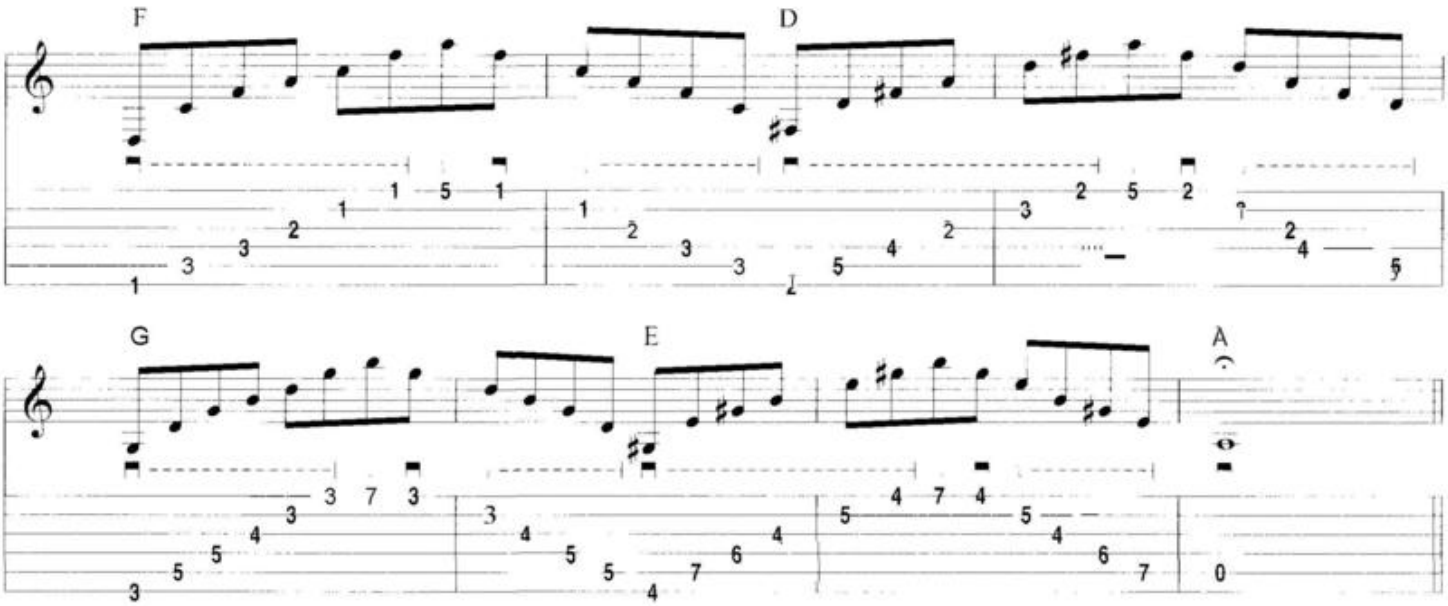


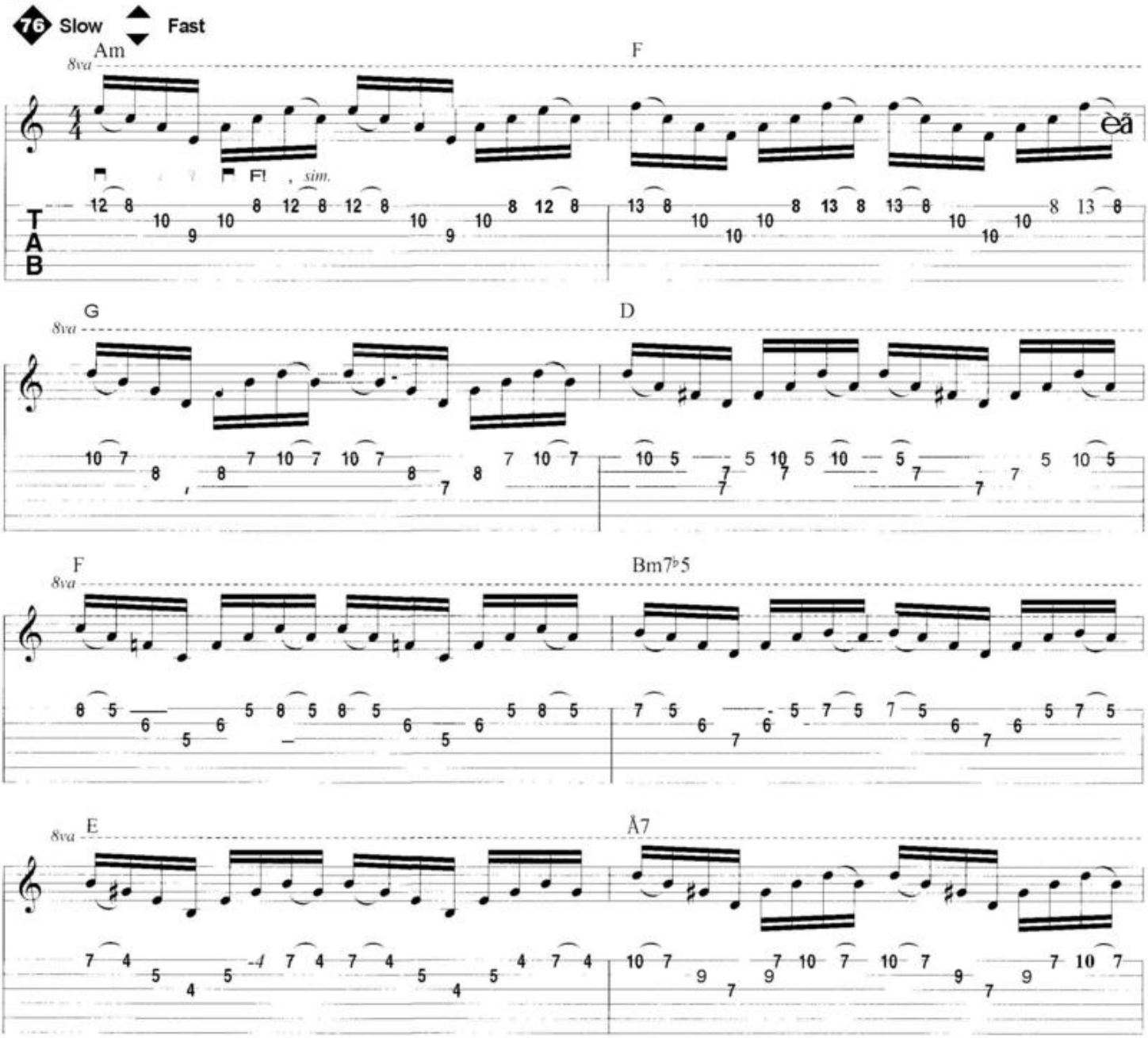
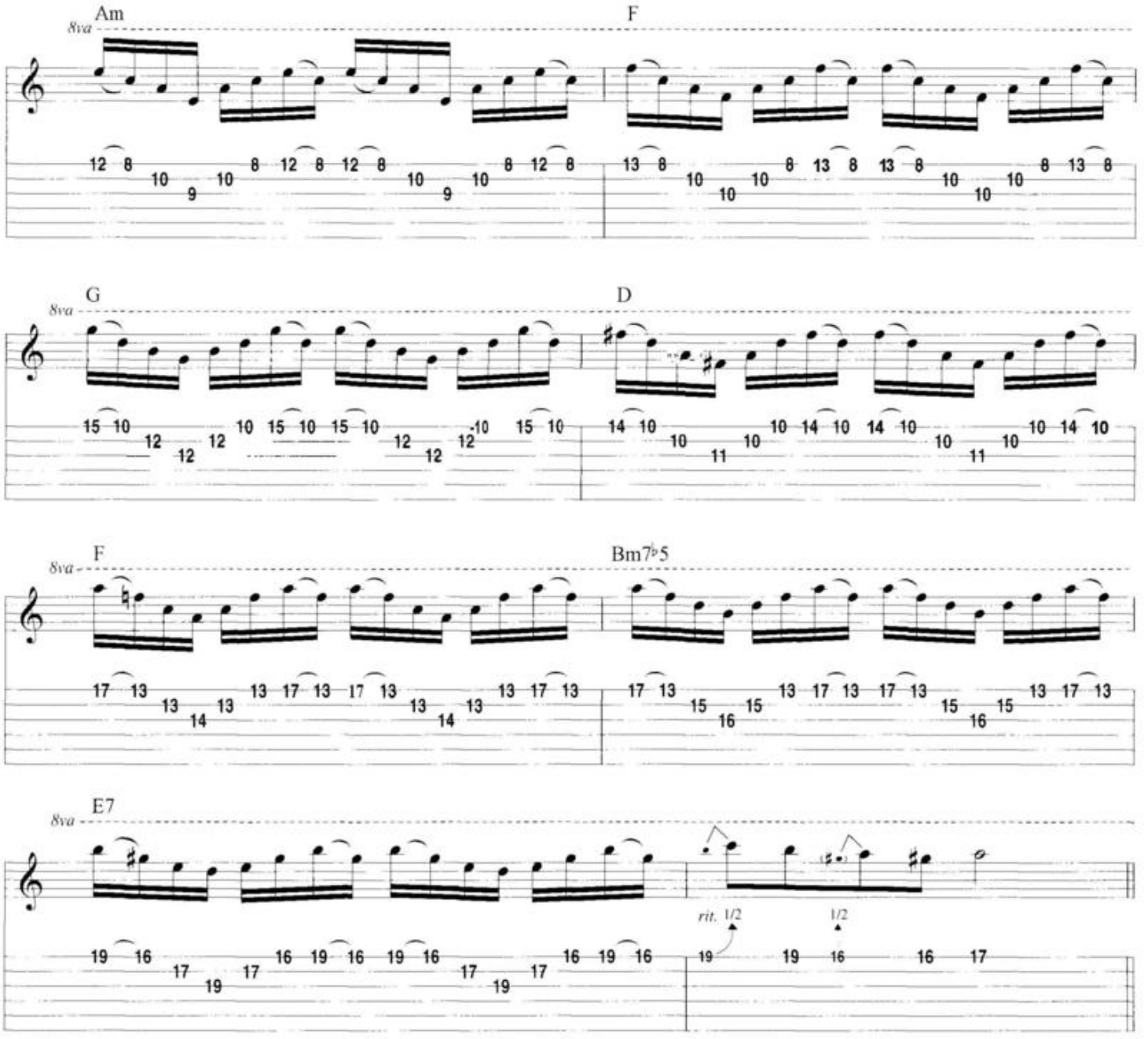
Fig. 57: E Major Arpeggio



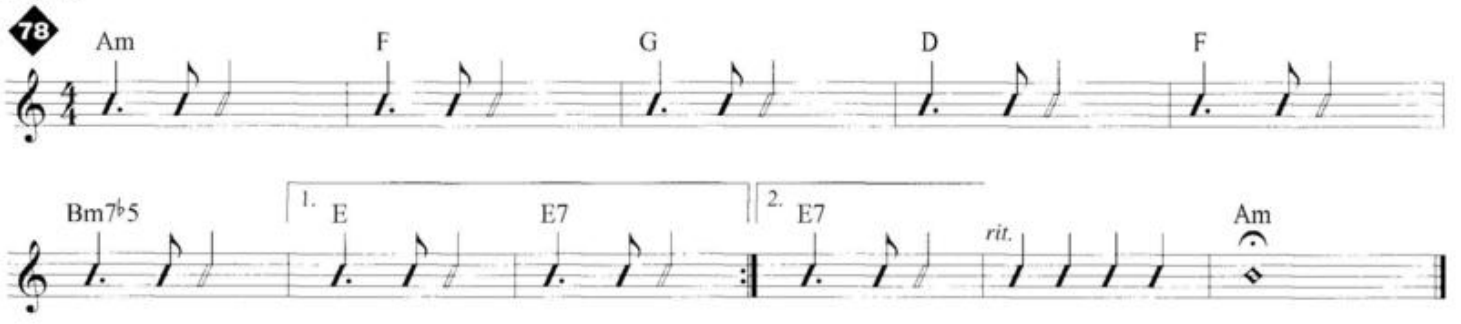
T = root

Fig. 58



For our last example we're going to get a little heavier. Check out how these sweeps outline the chords in this progression.

Fig. 59



Keep in mind that there is no "right" way to pick. You'll probably use many different techniques—maybe even in the same solo. The goal is to have control so you can play what you feel. If you can do that, you've

Fig. 60

CHAPTER 5

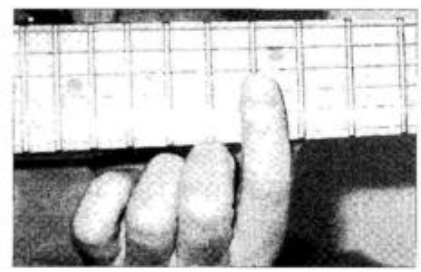
HARMONICS

H can create a variety of sounds from shimmering, clean rhythm patterns to screaming, over-the-top lead

vibrate."

wire—not

Natural harmonics



Natural Harmonics are harmonics that occur on each open string of the guitar. The strongest of these open-string harmonics seems to be on the twelfth fret. This is because the twelfth fret on the guitar is exactly half the distance between the nut and the bridge of the guitar.

Start by placing your fretting hand on top of the twelfth fret.

ger on the string and still hear the harmonic ring (but most commonly you should lift your finger immediately after striking the note). Practice this first step slowly until the notes are clear and have lots of sustain. Next

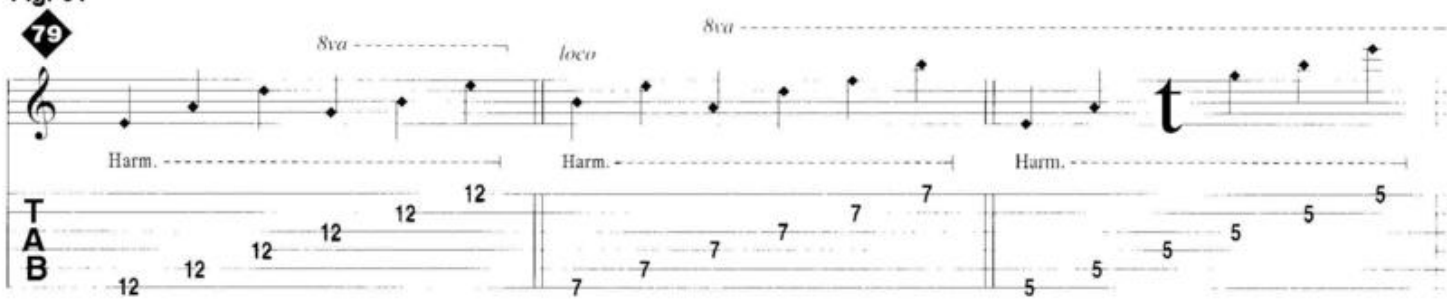
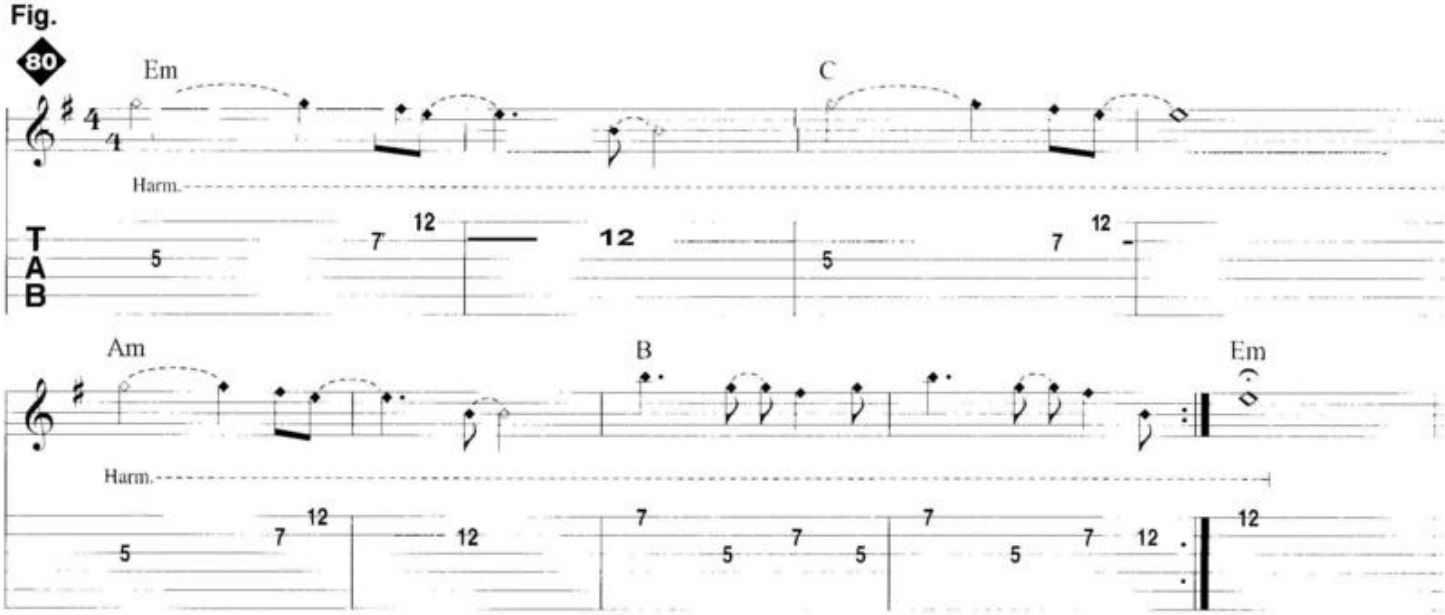
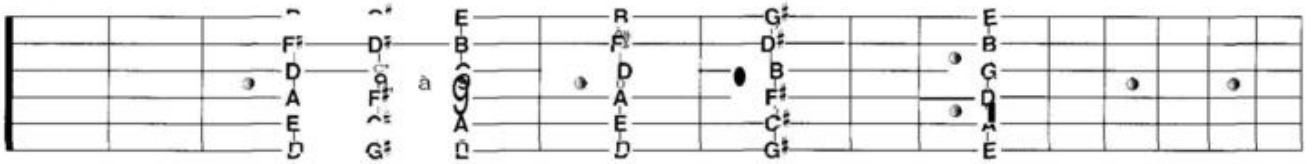
Fig. 61

Now let's apply some of these harmonics over a simple chord progression in E minor.

Fig.



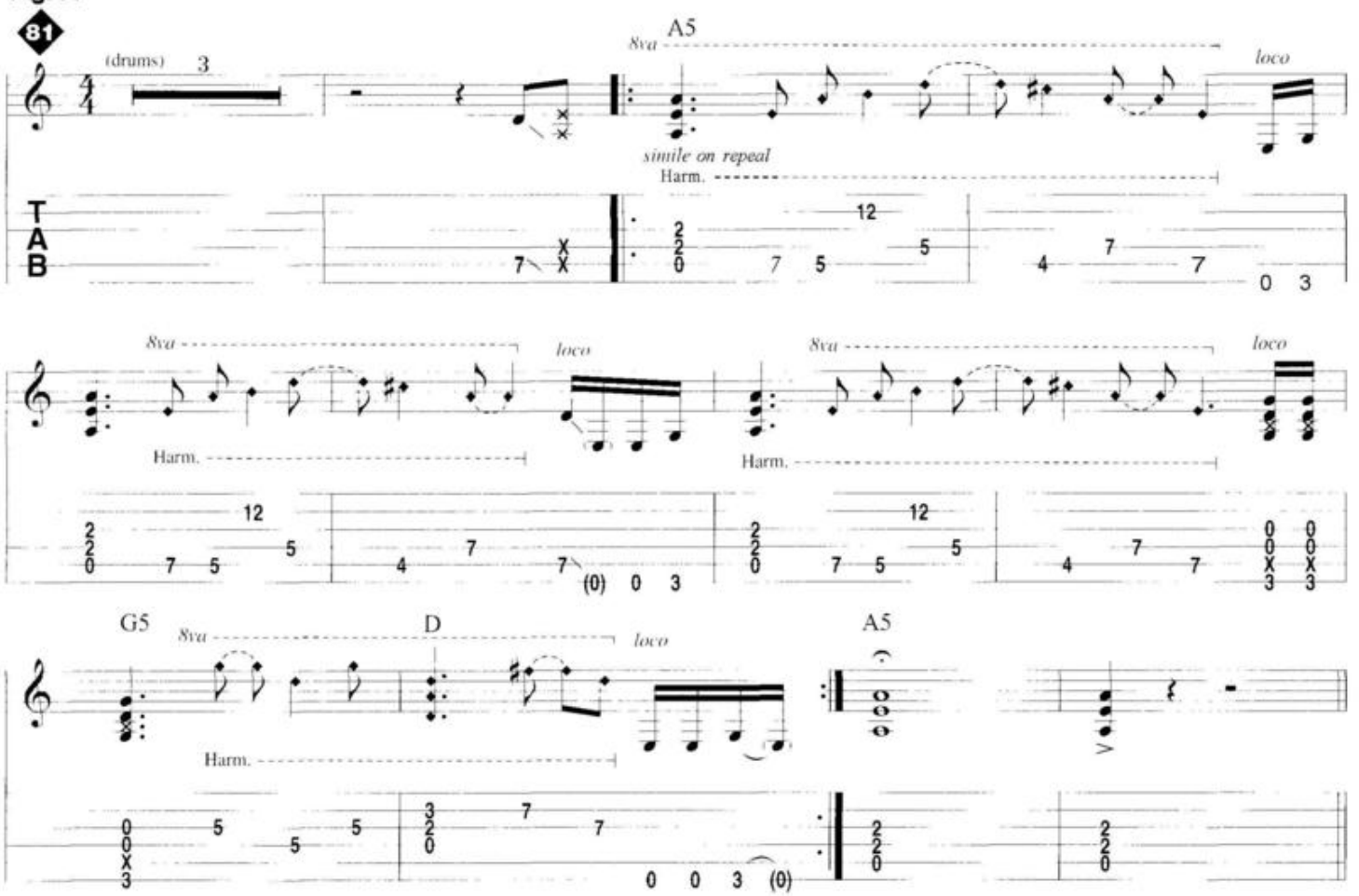
The pitch of the harmonic at the twelfth fret is the same as the name of the open string. In other words, if you play a harmonic on the twelfth fret of the D string, the pitch will also be D. However, some frets will produce notes other than the name of the open string which you are playing. Take a look at Fig. 63 for a brief

Fig. 63



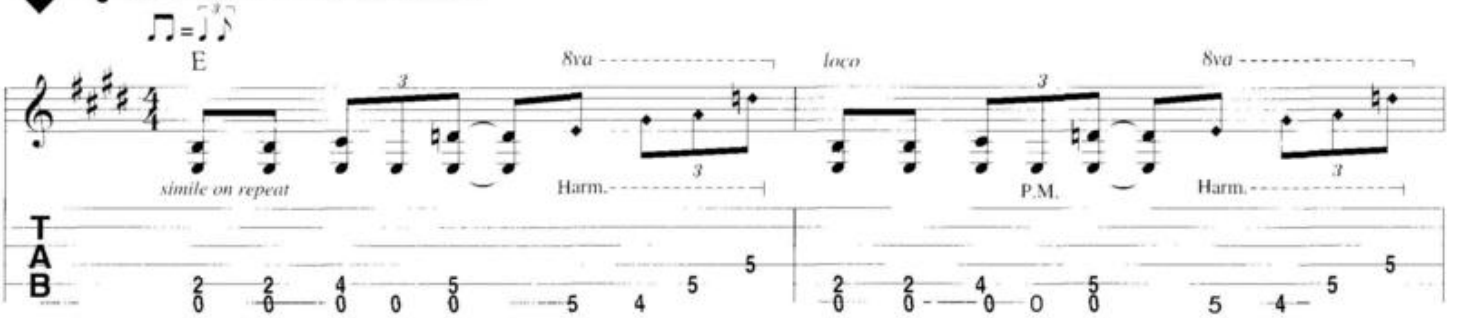
fifth). In this next example we're going to take advantage of these harmonics to create a more "major" sound. Remember, the fourth fret harmonic is a major third of the string you're on (see Fig. 63).

Fig. 64



Here's some harmonics combined with a simple I–IV–Vchord progression in E. Check out how the harmonics fit over each chord.

64 Fig. 65: Blues in E with Harmonics



While these are the most common open-string harmonics, some others are possible. Figures 66 and 67 show where to get a 9th and a ♭7. These may be tough, but they're there.

Fig. 66: the 9th

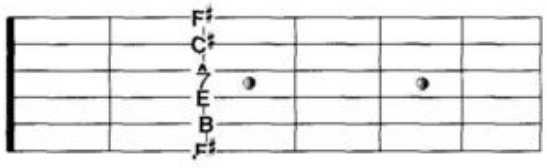
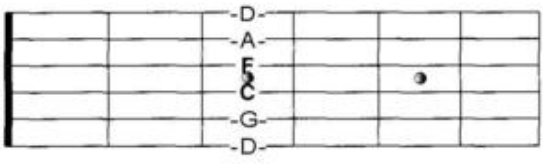
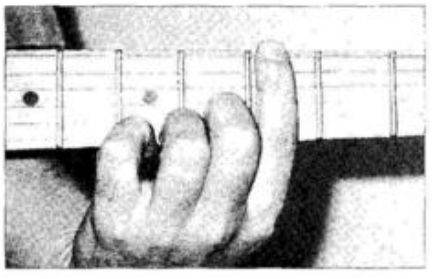


Fig. ♭7



*Note: Figure 67—the ♭7 harmonic—is an exception to the "on top *in between* the second and third fret.



Fretted harmonics

Fretted harmonics allow you to play any note as a harmonic—not just the open string notes. The har-

if you play the note E on the second fret of the D string, you can create the harmonic of the note E one octave (twelve frets) above the second fret. This means one of the possible harmonic overtones of the second fret E will occur at the fourteenth fret.

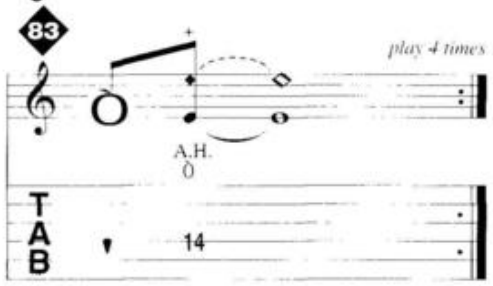
The question is—how do you get the harmonic to ring? There are two common ways:

Tap harmonics

This is when you "tap" or "pop" the string with your picking hand at a specific interval above the fretted note. Remember: you must tap *on top of* the fret wire. Most people use their first finger, but any finger will do.

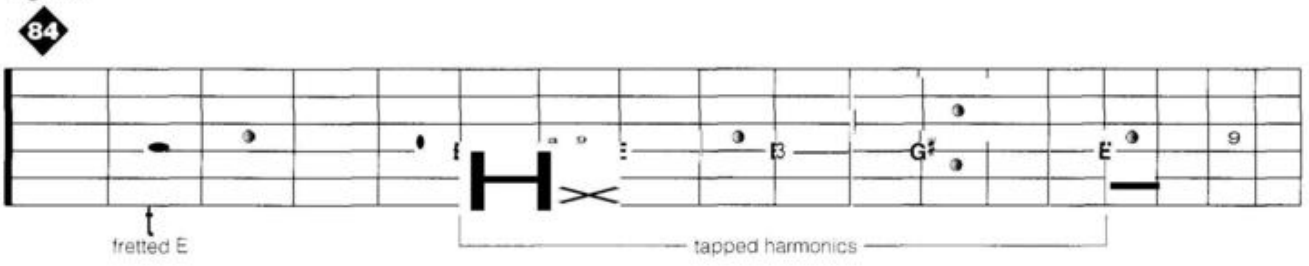
Listen to the next CD track. First I'll play the note E on the second fret of the D string. Next I'll tap the

Fig. 68



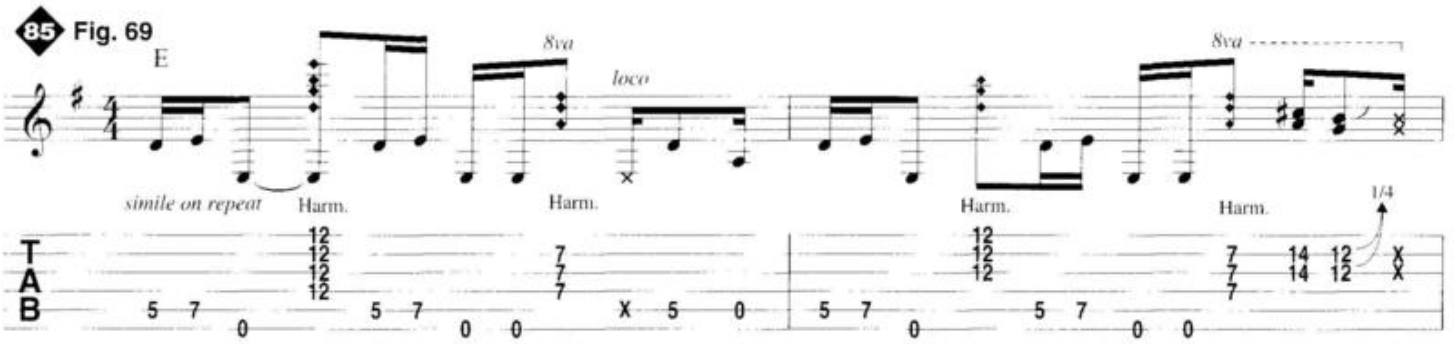
The following figure gives you an idea of which harmonics are possible from a fretted E note at the sec-

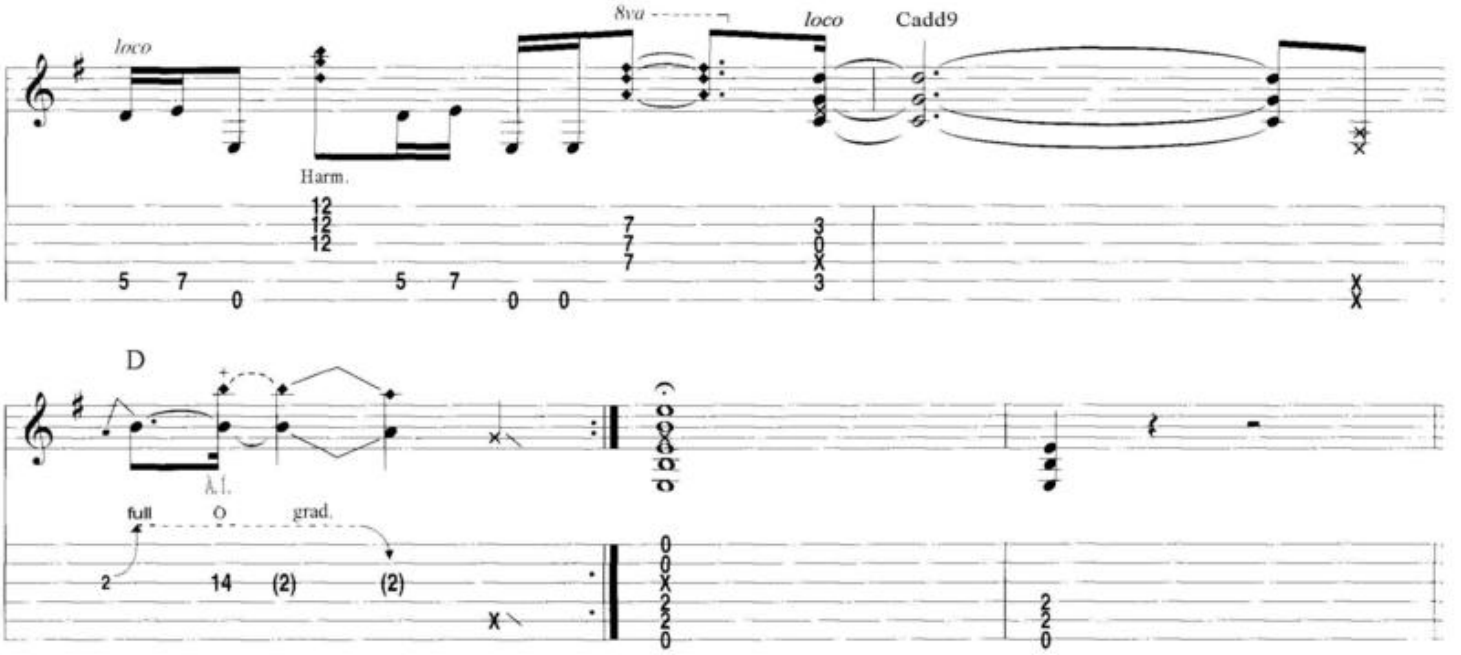
Fig. 69



Listen and then try these tapped harmonics out for yourself. It may take some time to get the hang of this technique—after all, it is pretty hard. Try not to get too frustrated.

Our next CD track combines open string harmonics with tapping harmonics.





Harp Harmonics

technique follow these simple steps:

A. Place your first finger on the harmonic to be plucked. (see picture)

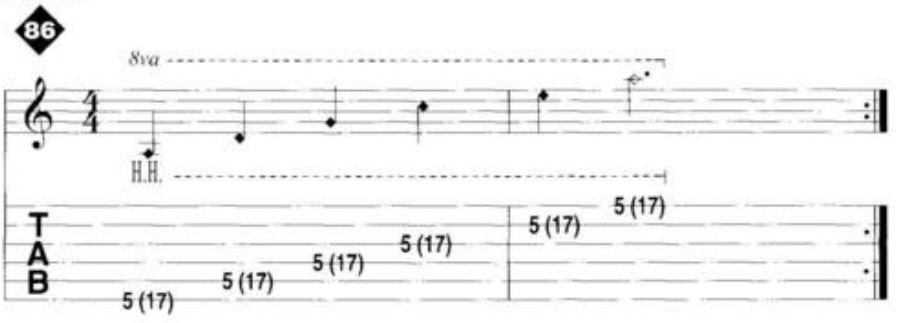
string.

(see picture)

C. Using your thumb as a pick, "pluck" the harmonic with your picking hand.

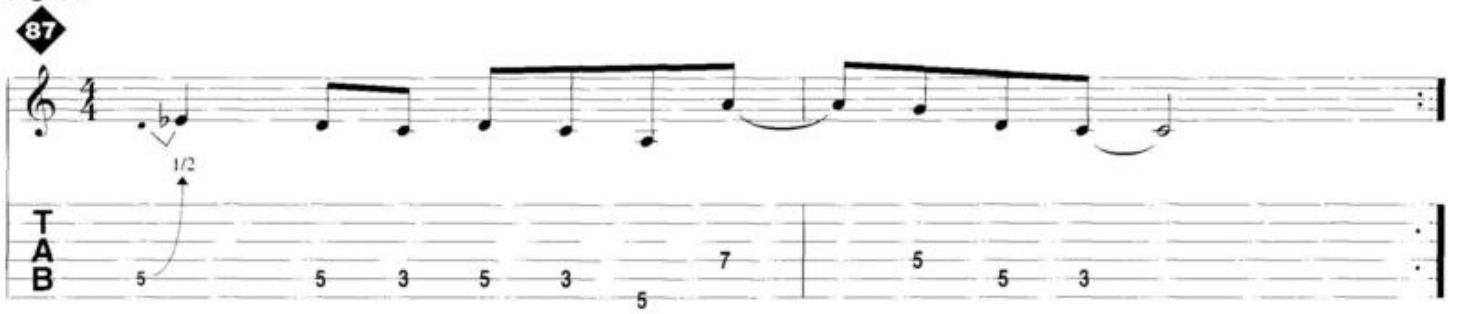
Let's try this with a clean tone. While barring fret 5, pluck the harmonics on the seventeenth fret.

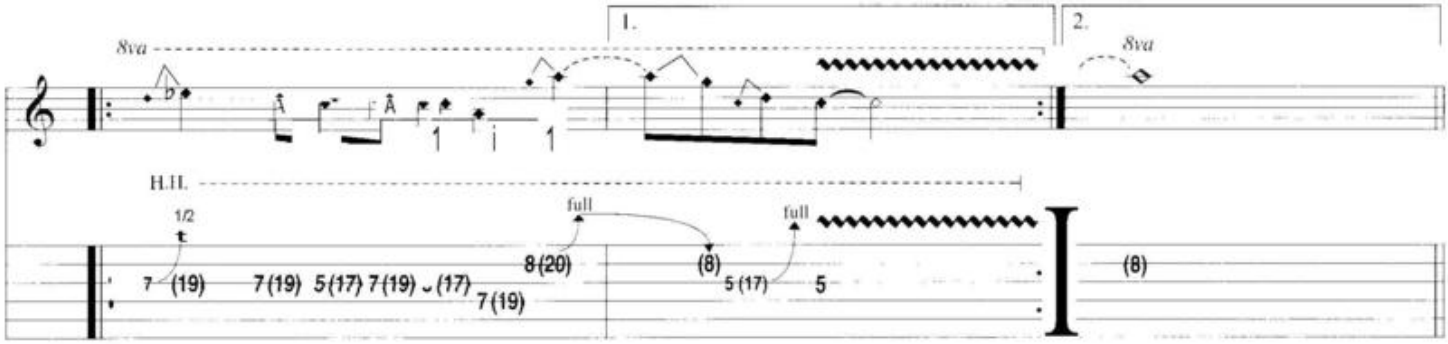
Fig. 71



Let's go ahead and try this technique out with the band. This next phrase uses the A blues scale. In the CD track I'll play the riff first without harmonics and then with the harp harmonics. Check out the difference.

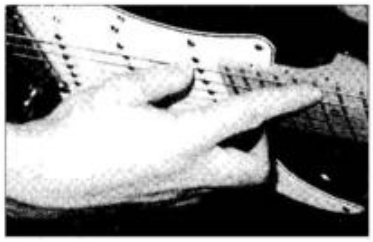
Fig. 72





When used in combination with notes that are not harmonics, this harp technique can create some awe-

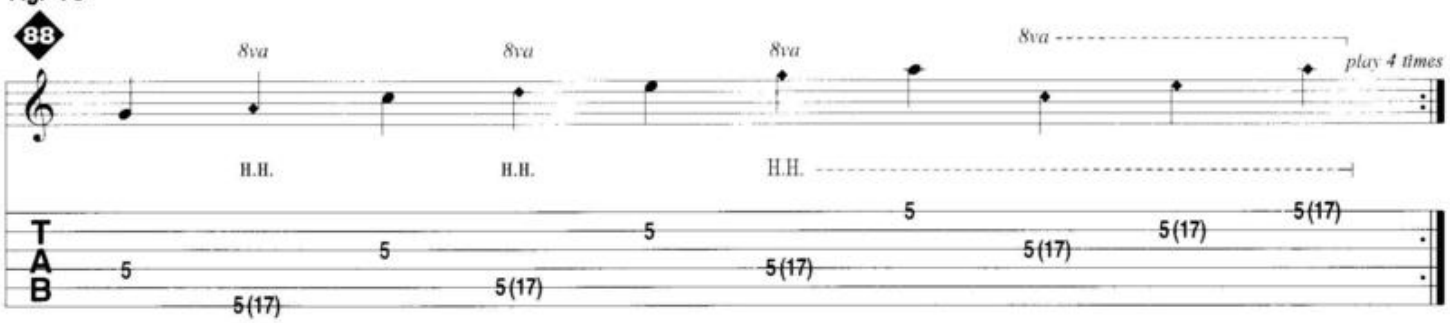
hand, pick the D string—
not the harmonic.



With your first finger creating the harmonic of the seventeenth fret, use your

The possible combinations of picked notes and harmonic notes are endless, but for now let's continue this way:

Fig. 73

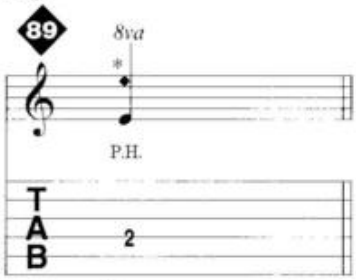


The final type of harmonics we're going to talk about is *pinch harmonics*. These harmonics are created by "pinching" the strings with a

right).

Pinch harmonics are different than the previous harmonics we've talked about because they can be created anywhere on the string. Lots of distortion can also be a big help.

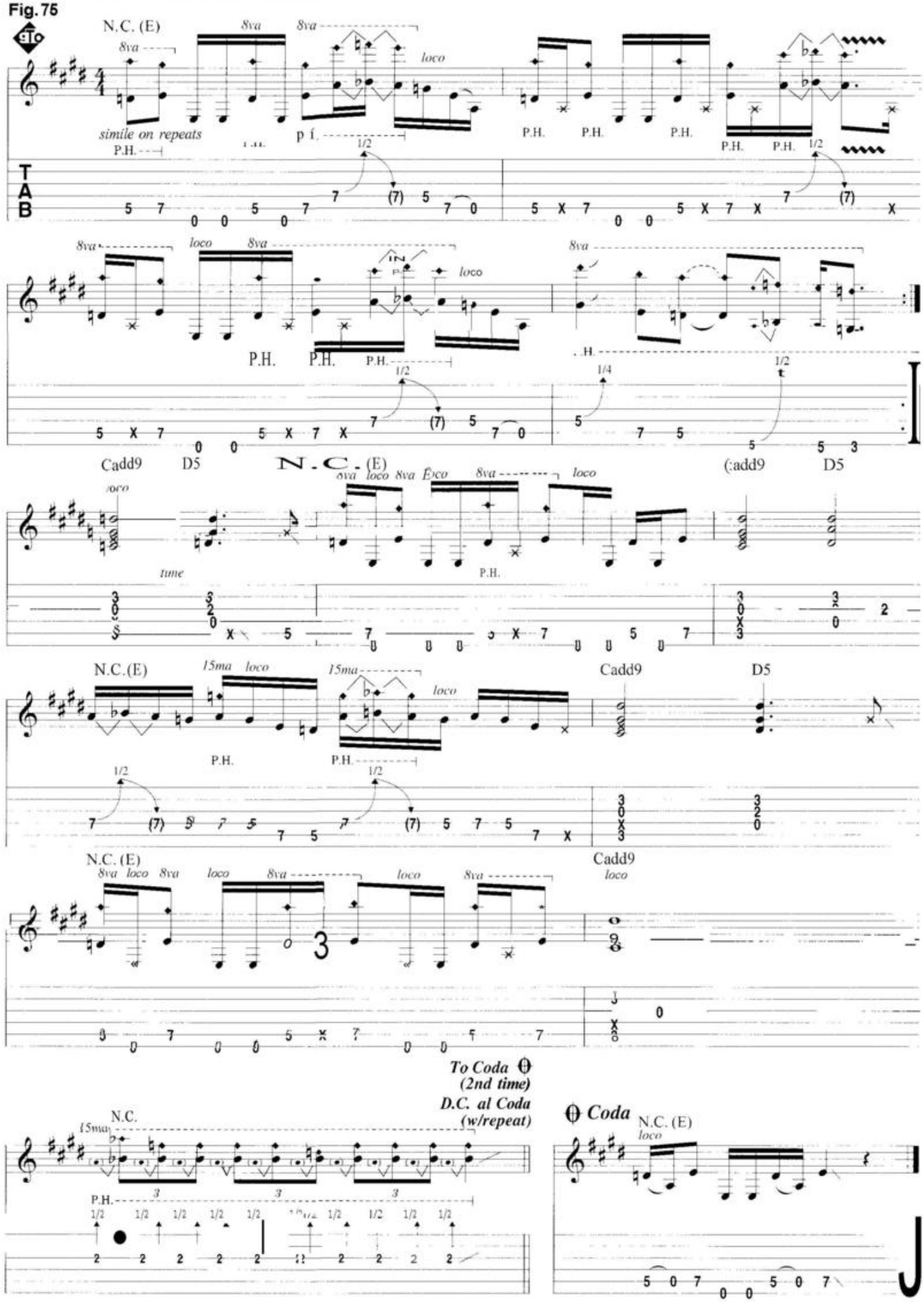
Fig.



* produced on the recording, not just this one.

Now let's try a longer example.

Fig. 75



CHAPTER 6

SOLO CONSTRUCTION

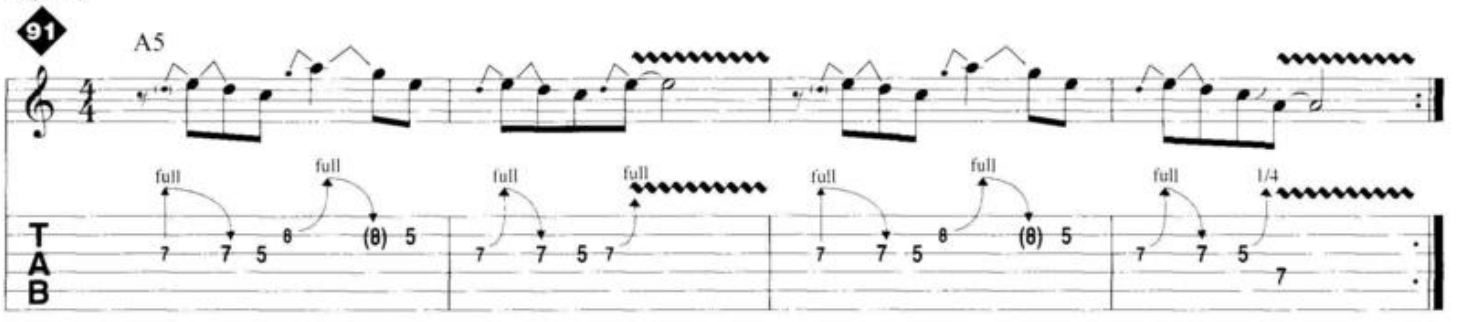
How to create a solo for *a* song is a vast subject that could fill many books. There's no real method for making the perfect solo since every song is different. In this chapter we'll discuss some of the aspects that make a good solo.

The word *motif* means: A short arrangement of notes that sounds "memorable." Think of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony: Da-Da-Da-DAAAAH. This is a good example of a motif.

As a rock guitarist, you should get used to making short phrases that sound memorable or even unusu-

scales. Once you've played your motif, back it up by playing it again, or play it just a bit differently. This will

Fig. 76

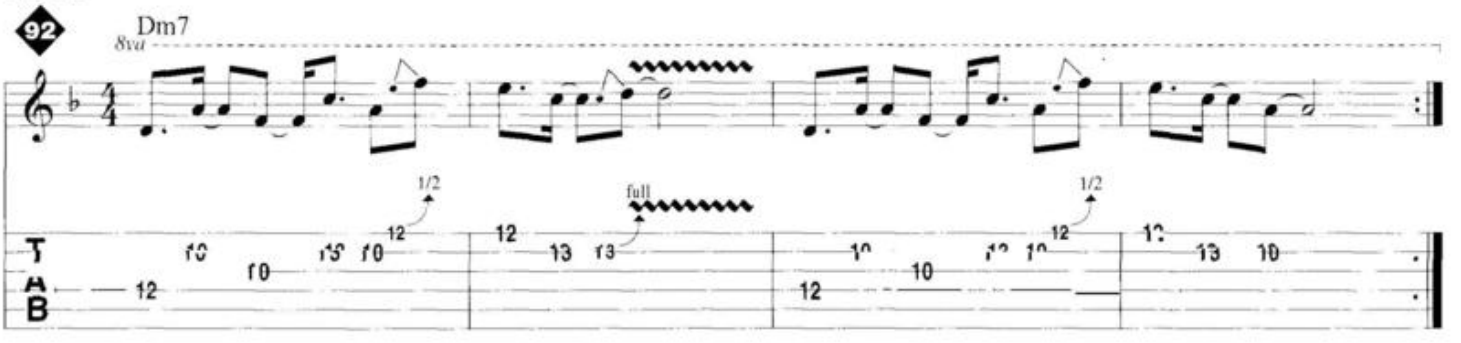


The figure below is another example of a motif and its answer. This time the motif gets its strength from

scale—it

a musical statement.

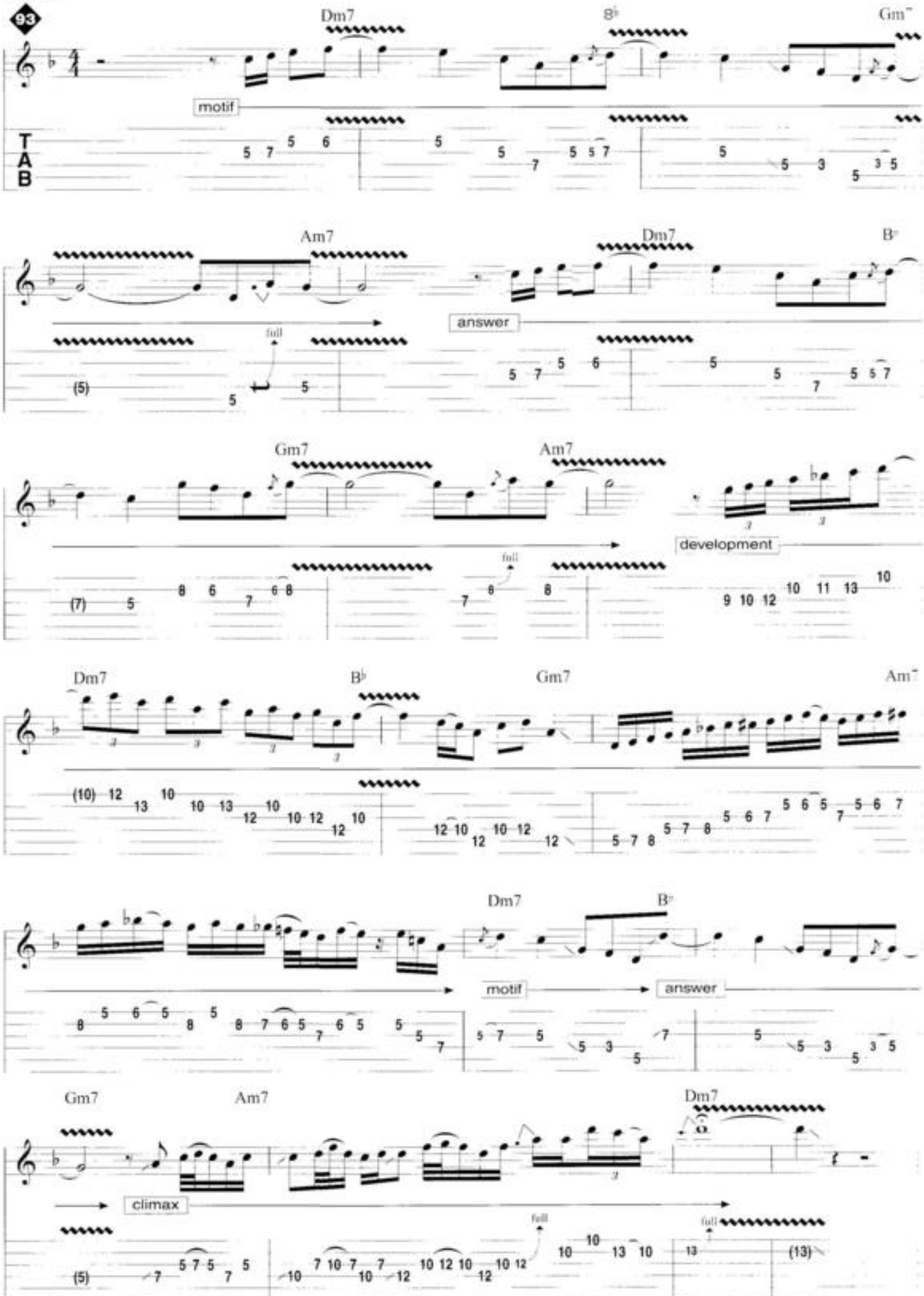
Fig. 77



Development and climax

the material you learned earlier in the book. The idea here is to create a motif, answer that motif, then expand with maybe a scale sequence or two-handed lick (or whatever you think sounds good). After a bit of development, it's a good idea to go back to a motif. Finally, when the end of the solo is near, it's always a good idea to build the intensity to a climactic end. Learn the following figure and play along with the CD.

Fig. 78


93
Dm7
B♭
Gm7
motif
T
A
B
Am7
Dm7
B♭
answer
full
Gm7
Am7
development
full
Dm7
B♭
Gm7
Am7
Dm7
B♭
motif
answer
Gm7
Am7
Dm7
climax
full
full

playing. Simply being aware of this should make you a better player. If you play all high notes it can become rhythm track to the progression below. Try to get as much variety as possible in your solo. Then learn the

Fig. 79

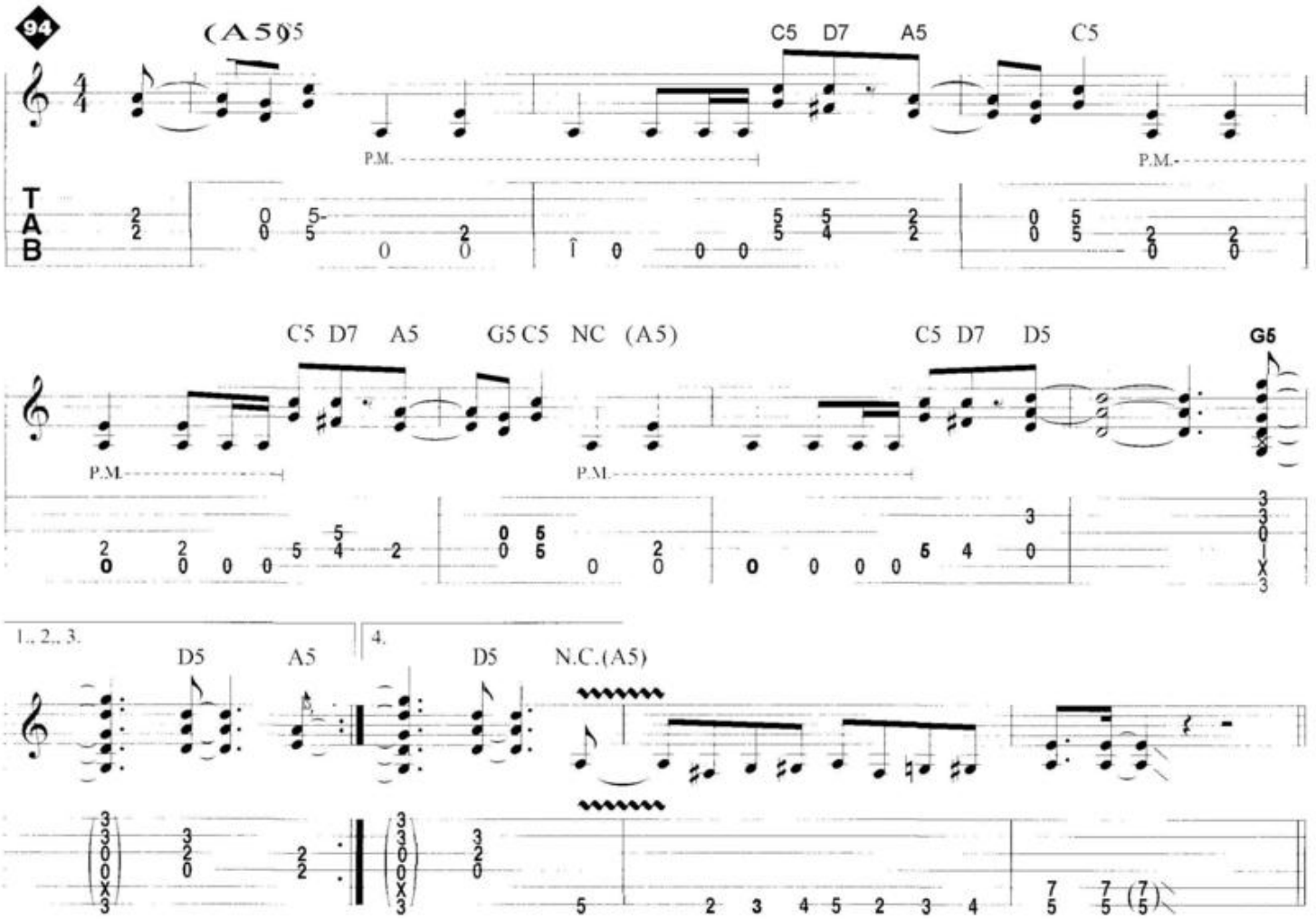
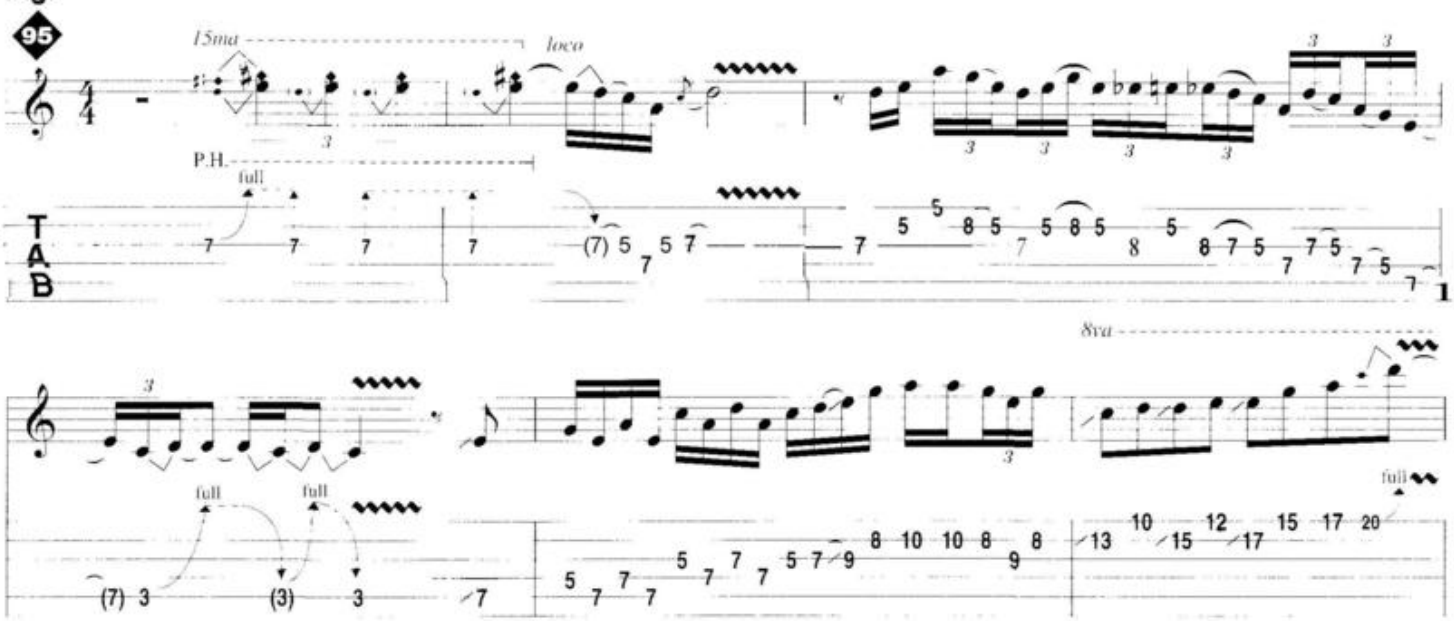
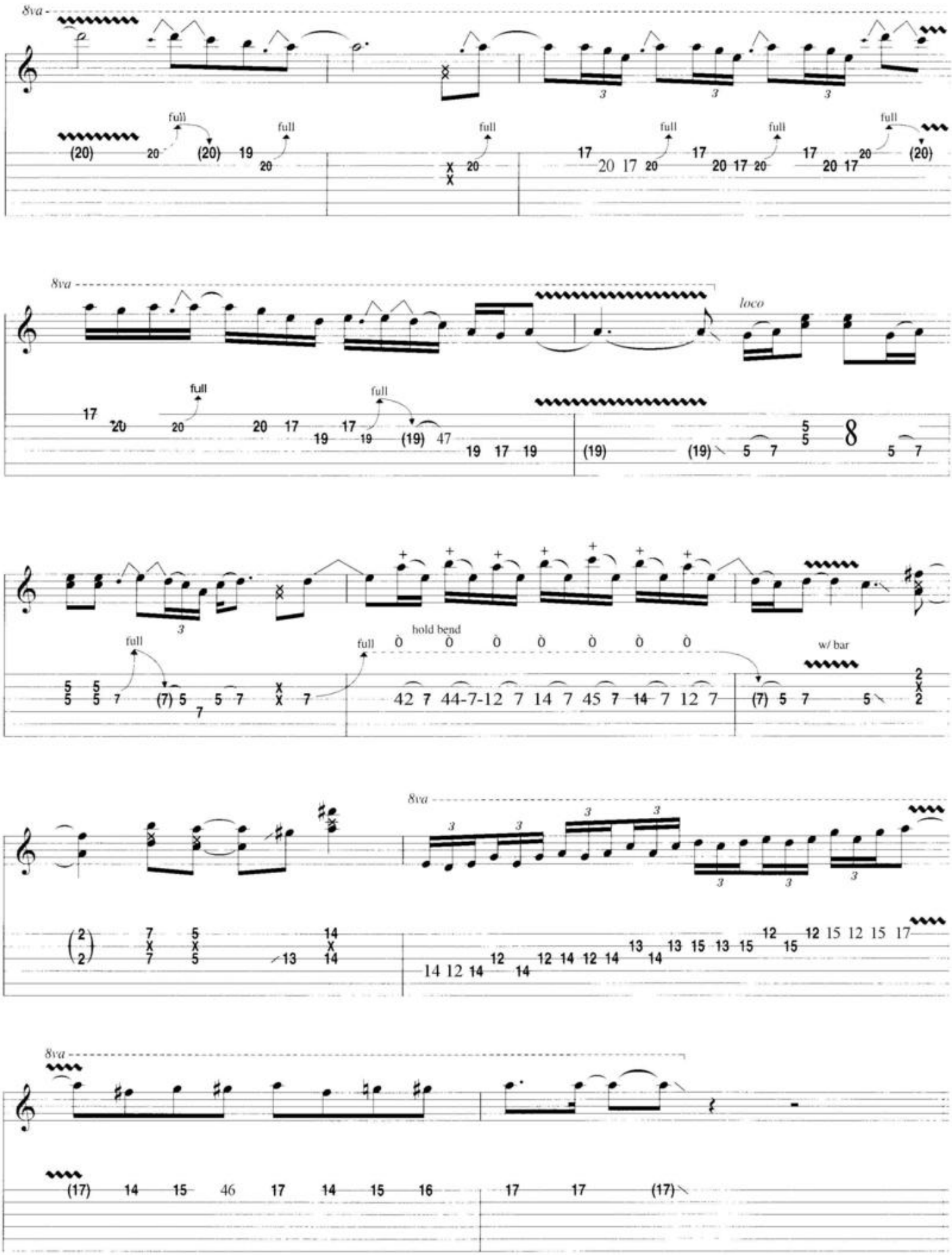



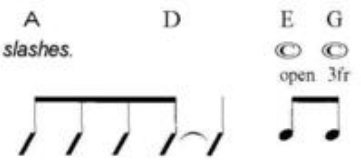
Fig.



8va
full
(20) 20 (20) 19 20
full
full
17 20 17 20 17 20 17 20 17 20 17 20 (20)
full
full
full
8va
loco
17 20 20 20 17 19 17 19 (19) 47 19 17 19 (19) (19) 5 7 5 5 8 5 7
full
full
hold bend
w/ bar
5 5 5 5 7 (7) 5 7 5 7 X X 7 42 7 44-7-12 7 14 7 45 7 14 7 12 7 (7) 5 7 5 2 X 2
8va
2 2 7 X 7 5 X 5 13 14 X 14 14 12 14 12 14 14 12 14 13 14 13 15 13 15 12 15 12 15 12 15 17
8va
(17) 14 15 46 17 14 15 16 17 17 (17)

GUITAR NOTATION LEGEND

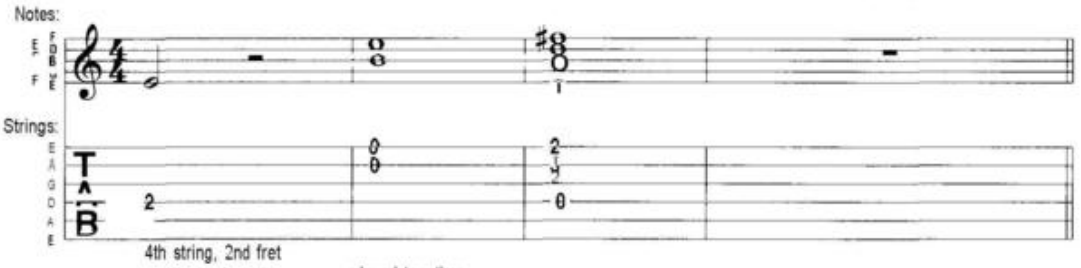
Guitar Music can be notated three different ways: on a *musical staff*, in *tablature*, and in *rhythm slashes*.

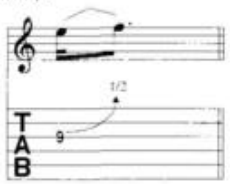
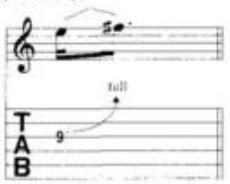
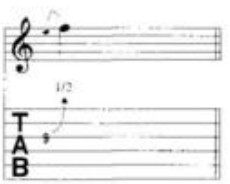


staff. Strum chords in the rhythm indicated. Use the chord diagrams found at the top of

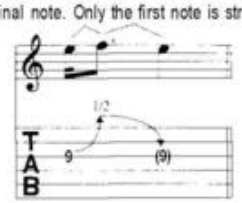
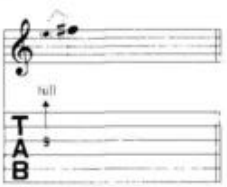
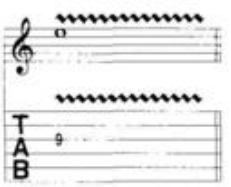
appropriate voicings. noteheads indicate single notes.

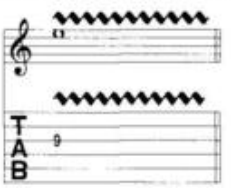
rhythms and is divided by bar lines into

TABLATURE graphically represents the guitar fingerboard. Each horizontal line represents a string, and each number

played together

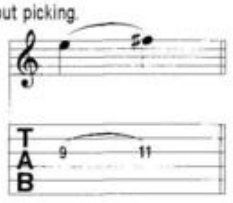
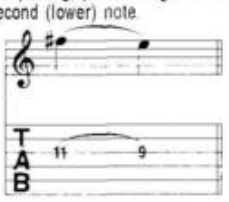
up 1/2 step.

bend up one step.

PRE-BEND: Bend the note as indicated, then strike it.

VIBRATO: The string is vibrated by rapidly bending and releasing the note with the

degree by vibrating with the fretting hand

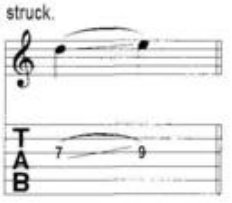
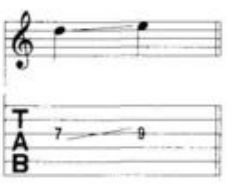
original note. Only the first note is struck.

PULL-OFF: Place both fingers on the notes to be sounded. Strike the first note and without picking, pull the finger off to sound the second (lower) note

LEGATO SLIDE: Strike the first note and

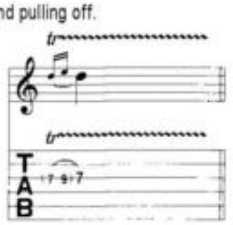
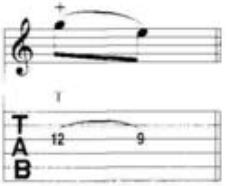
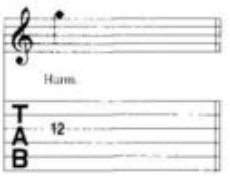
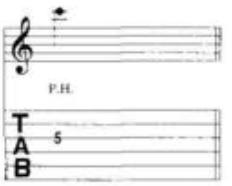
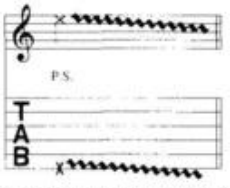
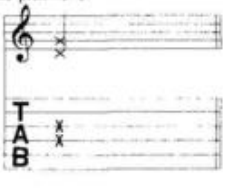


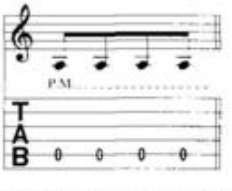
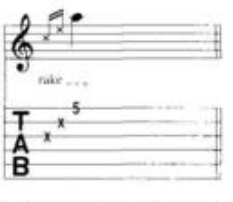
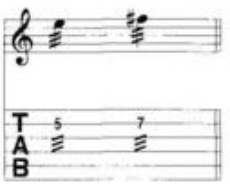
the second note is struck.

without picking.



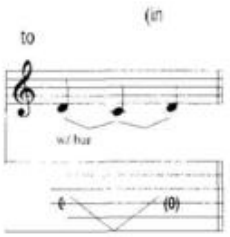
("tap")

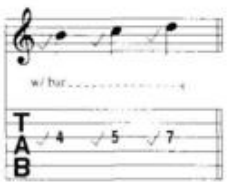
is not struck.

TRILL: Very rapidly alternate between the

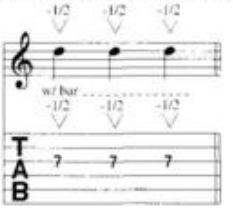
on and pulling off.

with
pull off to the note fretted by the fret hand.

the fret-hand lightly touches the string directly over the fret indicated.

PINCH HARMONIC: The note is fretted

PICK SCRAPE: The edge of the pick is rubbed down (or up) the string, producing

produced by laying the fret hand across the string(s) without depressing, and striking them with the pick hand

PALM MUTING: The note is partially muted

string(s) just before the bridge.

indicated with a single motion.

TREMOLO PICKING: The note is picked as

(in

to



VIBRATO BAR SCOOP: Depress the bar just before striking the note, then quickly release the bar

VIBRATO BAR DIP: Strike the note and then

steps, then release back to the original pitch.

Rock Lead TECHNIQUES

by Nick Nolan and Danny Gill

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